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HISTORY OF THE GIPSIES:

WITH

Specimens of the Gipsy Language.

BY WALTER SIMSON.

EDITED, WITH

PREFACE, INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES, AND A DISQUISITION ON THE
PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF GIPSYDOM,

BY JAMES SIMSON.

' Hast thou not noted on the bye way-side,
Where aged saughs lean o'er the lazy tide,
A vagrant crew, far straggled through the glade,
With trifles busied, or in slumber laid;
Their children lolling round them on the grass,
Or pestering with their sports the patient ass?
The wrinkled beidanie there you may espy,
And ripe young maiden with the glassy eye;
Men in their prime, and striplings dark and dun,
Scathed by the storm and freckled with the sun;
Their swarthy hue and mantle's flowing fold,
Bespeak the remnant of a race of old.
Strange are their annals—list! and mark them well—
For thou hast much to hear and I to tell."—Hocoo.

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NEW YORK:

M. DOOLADY, 448 BROOME STREET.

LONDON:

SAMPSON LOW, SON & MARSTON.

1866.

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555

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1865,

By JAMES SIMSON,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District
of New York.

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* The Contents of these Chapters will be found detailed in the Index, forming an epitome of the work, for reference, or studying the subject of the Gipsies.

EVER since entering Great Britain, about the year 1506, the Gipsies have been drawing into their body the blood of the ordinary inhabitants and conforming to their ways; and so prolific has the race been, that there cannot be less than 250,000 Gipsies of all castes, colours, characters, occupations, degrees of education, culture, and position in life, in the British Isles alone, and possibly double that number. There are many of the same race in the United States of America. Indeed, there have been Gipsies in America from nearly the first day of its settlement; for many of the race were banished to the plantations, often for very trifling offences, and sometimes merely for being by "habit and repute Egyptians." But as the Gipsy race leaves the tent, and rises to civilization, it hides its nationality from the rest of the world, so great is the prejudice against the name of Gipsy. In Europe and America together, there cannot be less than 4,000,000 Gipsies in existence. John Bunyan, the author of the celebrated *Pilgrim's Progress*, was one of this singular people, as will be conclusively shown in the present work. The philosophy of the existence of the Jews, since the dispersion, will also be discussed and established in it.

When the "wonderful story" of the Gipsies is told, as it ought to be told, it constitutes a work of interest to many classes of readers, being a subject unique, distinct from, and unknown to, the rest of the human family. In the present work, the race has been treated of so fully and elaborately, in all its aspects, as in a great measure to fill and satisfy the mind, instead of being, as heretofore, little better than a myth to the understanding of the most intelligent person.

The history of the Gipsies, when thus comprehensively treated, forms a study for the most advanced and cultivated mind, as well as for the youth whose intellectual and literary character is still to be formed; and furnishes, among other things, a system of science not too abstract in its nature, and having for its subject-matter the strongest of human feelings and sympathies. The work also seeks to raise the name of Gipsy out of the dust, where it now lies; while it has a very important bearing on the conversion of the Jews, the advancement of Christianity generally, and the development of historical and moral science.

NEW YORK, May 1st, 1866.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THIS work should have been introduced to the world long ere now. The proper time to have brought it forward would have been about twenty years ago,* when the subject was nearly altogether new, and when popular feeling, in Scotland especially, ran strongly toward the body it treats of, owing to the celebrity of the writings of the great Scottish novelist, in which were depicted, with great truthfulness, some real characters of this wayward race. The inducements then to hazard a publication of it were great; for by bringing it out at that time, the author would have enjoyed, in some measure, the sunshine which the fame of that great luminary cast around all who, in any way, illustrated a subject on which he had written. But for Sir Walter Scott's advice—an advice that can only be appreciated by those who are acquainted with the vindictive disposition which the Gipsies entertain toward those whom they imagine to have injured them—our author would have published a few magazine articles on the subject, when the tribe would have taken alarm, and an end would have been made to the investigation. The dread of personal danger, there is no doubt, formed a considerable reason for the work being so long withheld from the public: at the same time, our author, being a timid and nervous man, not a little dreaded the spleen of the party opposed to the literary society with which he identified himself, and the idea of being made the subject of one of the slashing criticisms so characteristic of the times. But now he has descended into the tomb, with most of his generation, where the abuse of a reviewer or the ire of a wandering Egyptian cannot reach him.

Since this work was written there has appeared one by

* It has been brought down, however, to the present time.

Mr. Borrow, on the *Gitanos* or Spanish Gipsies. In the year 1838, a society was formed in Scotland, under the patronage of the Scottish Church, for the reformation of the wandering portion of the body in that country, with some eminent men as a committee of management, among whom was a reverend gentleman of learning, piety, and worth, who said that he himself was a Gipsy, and whose fine swarthy features strongly marked the stock from which he was descended. There are others in that country of a like origin, ornaments to the same profession, and many in other respectable walks of life, of whom I will speak in my Disquisition on the Gipsies, at the end of the work.

Although a few years have elapsed since the principal details of this work were collected, the subject cannot be considered as old. The body in Scotland has become more numerous since the downfall of Napoleon; but the improved system of internal order that has obtained since that period, has so very much suppressed their acts of depredation and violence toward the community, and their savage outbursts of passion toward those of their own race who had offended them, that much which would have met with only a slight punishment before, or in some instances been passed over, as a mere Gipsy scuffle, would now be visited with the utmost penalty the law could inflict. Hence the wild spirit, but not the number, of the body has been very much crushed. Many of them have betaken themselves to regular callings of industry, or otherwise withdrawn from public observation; but, in respect to race, are as much, at heart, Gipsies as before. Many of the Scottish wandering class have given way before an invasion of swarms of Gipsies from Ireland.

It is almost unnecessary to give a reason why this work has been introduced here, instead of the country in which it was written, and of which, for the most part, it treats. Suffice it to say, that, having come to this country, I have been led to bring it out here, where it may receive, sooner or later, more attention from those at a distance from the place and people it treats of, than from those accustomed to see and hear of them daily, to many of whom they appear as mere vagabonds; it being a common feature in the human mind, that that which comes frequently under our observation is but little thought of, while that at a distance,

and unknown to us, forms the subject of our investigations and desires.* In taking this view of the subject, the language of Dr. Bright may be used, when he says: "The condition and circumstances of the Gipsy nation throughout the whole of Europe, may truly be considered amongst the most curious phenomena in the history of man." And although this work, for the most part, treats of Scottish Gipsies, it illustrates the history of the people all over Europe, and, it may be said, pretty much over the world; and affords materials for reflection on so singular a subject connected with the history of our common family, and so little known to mankind in general. To the American reader generally, the work will illustrate a phase of life and history with which it may be reasonably assumed he is not much conversant; for, although he must have some knowledge of the Gipsy race generally, there is no work, that I am aware of, that treats of the body like the present. To all kinds of readers the words of the celebrated Christopher North, as quoted in the author's Introduction, may be addressed:

"Few things more sweetly vary civil life
Than a barbarian, savage Tinkler† tale."

It is a singular circumstance that, until comparatively lately, little was known of this body in Scotland, beyond their mere existence, and the depredations which they committed on their neighbours; no further proof of which need

* "Men of letters, while eagerly investigating the customs of Otaheite or Kamschatka, and losing their tempers in endless disputes about Gothic and Celtic antiquities, have witnessed, with apathy and contempt, the striking spectacle of a Gipsy camp—pitched, perhaps, amidst the mouldering entrenchments of their favourite Picts and Romans. The rest of the community, familiar from infancy with the general character and appearance of these vagrant hordes, have probably never regarded them with any deeper interest than what springs from the recollected terrors of a nursery tale, or the finer associations of poetical and picturesque description."—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

† *Tinkler* is the name generally applied to the Scottish Gipsies. The wandering, tented class prefer it to the term Gipsy. The settled and better classes detest the word: they would much rather be called Gipsies; but the term Egyptian is the most agreeable to their feelings. *Tinkler* has a peculiar meaning that can be understood only by a Scotchman. In its radical sense it means *Tinker*. The verb *tink*, according to Jamieson's Scottish Dictionary, means to "rivet, including the idea of the noise made in the operation of riveting; a Gipsy word."

be given than a reference to the letters of Sir Walter Scott and others, in the Introduction to the work, and the avidity with which the few articles of our author in *Blackwood's Magazine* were read.

The higher we may rise in the scale of general information and philosophic culture, the greater the attractions will this moral puzzle have for our contemplation—the phenomenon of a barbarous race of men, free as the air, with little but the cold earth for a bed, and the canopy of heaven for a covering, obtruding itself upon a civilized community, and living so long in the midst of it, without any material impression being made on the habits of the representative part of it; the only instance of the kind in the modern history of the world. In this solitary case, having nothing from which to reason analogously as to the result, observation alone must be had recourse to for the solution of the experiment. It is from this circumstance that the subject, in all its bearings, has been found to have such charms for the curious and learned; being, as it were, a study in history of the most interesting kind. It may be remarked that Professor Wilson, the Christopher North of *Blackwood*, is said to have accompanied some of the tribe in their peregrinations over parts of England and Wales. Without proceeding to the same length, our author, in his own peculiar way, prosecuted his researches with much indefatigability, assiduity, and patience. He kept an open house for them at all times, and presented such allurements as the skillful trapper of vermin will sometimes use in attracting the whole in a neighbourhood; when if one Gipsy entered, many would follow; although he would generally find them so shy in their communications as sometimes to require years of such baiting to ensure them for the elucidation of a single point of their history. In this way he made himself appear, in his associations with them, as very odd, and perhaps not of very sound mind, in the estimation of the wise ones around him.

The popular idea of a Gipsy, at the present day, is very erroneous as to its extent and meaning. The nomadic Gipsies constitute but a portion of the race, and a very small portion of it. A gradual change has come over their outward condition, all over Europe, from about the commencement of the first American war, but from what time

previous to that, we have no certain data from which to form an opinion. In the whole of Great Britain they have been very much mixed with the native blood of the country, but nowhere, I believe, so much so as in Scotland. There is every reason to suppose that the same mixture has taken place in Europe generally, although its effects are not so observable in the southern countries—from the circumstance of the people there being, for the most part, of dark hair and complexion—as in those lying further toward the north. But this circumstance would, to a certain extent, prevent the mixture which has taken place in countries the inhabitants of which have fair hair and complexions. The causes leading to this mixture are various.

The persecutions to which the Gipsies were exposed, merely for being Gipsies, which their appearance would readily indicate, seem to have induced the body to intermarry with our race, so as to disguise theirs. That would be done by receiving and adopting males of our race, whom they would marry to females of theirs, who would bring up the children of such unions as members of their fraternity. They also adopted the practice to give their race stamina, as well as numbers, to contend with the people among whom they lived. The desire of having servants, (for Gipsies, generally, have been too proud to do menial work for each other,) led to many children being kidnapped, and reared among them; many of whom, as is customary with Oriental people, rose to as high a position in the tribe as any of themselves.*

Then again, it was very necessary to have people of fair complexion among them, to enable them the more easily to carry on their operations upon the community, as well as to contribute to their support during times of persecution. Ow-

* Mr. Borrow labours under a very serious mistake when he asserts that "The unfounded idea, that Gipsies steal children, to bring them up as Gipsies, has been the besetting sin of authors, who have attempted to found works of fiction on the way of life of this most singular people." The only argument which he advances to refute this belief in regard to Gipsies, which is universal, is the following: "They have plenty of children of their own, whom they can scarcely support; and they would smile at the idea of encumbering themselves with the children of others." This is rather inconsistent with his own words, when he says, "I have dealt more in facts than in theories, of which I am, in general, no friend." As a matter of fact, children have been stolen and brought up as Gipsies, and incorporated with the tribe.

ing to these causes, and the occasional occurrence of white people being, by more legitimate means, received into their body, which would be more often the case in their palmy days, the half, at least, of the Scottish Gipsies are of fair hair and blue eyes. Some would naturally think that these would not be Gipsies, but the fact is otherwise ; for, owing to the dreadful prejudice which has always attached to the name of Gipsy, these white and parti-coloured Gipsies, imagining themselves, as it were, banished from society, on account of their descent, cling to their Gipsy connection ; as the other part of their blood, they imagine, will not own them. They are Gipsies, and, with the public, they think that is quite enough. They take a pride in being descended from a race so mysterious, so ancient, so universal, and cherish their language the more from its being the principal badge of membership that entitles them to belong to it. The nearer they approach the whites as regards blood, the more acutely do they feel the antipathy which is entertained for their race, and the more bitter does the propinquity become to them. The more enlightened they become, the stronger becomes their attachment to the sept in the abstract, although they will despise many of its members. The sense of such an ancient descent, and the possession of such an ancient and secret language, in the minds of men of comparatively limited education and indifferent rearing, brought up in humble life, and following various callings, from a tinker upward, and even of men of education and intelligence, occupying the position of lawyers, medical doctors, and clergymen, possess for them a charm that is at once fascinating and enchanting. If men of enlightened minds and high social standing will go to such lengths as they have done, in their endeavours to but look into their language, how much more will they not cling to it, such as it is, in whose hearts it is ? Gipsies compounded for the most part of white blood, but with Gipsy feelings, are, as a general thing, much superior to those who more nearly approach what may be called the original stock ; and, singularly enough, speak the language better than the others, if their opportunities have been in any way favourable for its acquisition.

The primitive, original state of the Gipsies is the tent and tilted cart. But as any country can support only a limited number in that way, and as the increase of the body is very

large, it follows that they must cast about to make a living in some other way, however bitter the pill may be which they have to swallow. The nomadic Gipsy portion resembles, in that respect, a water trough; for the water which runs into it, there must be a corresponding quantity running over it. The Gipsies who leave the tent resemble the youth of our small seaports and villages; for there, society is so limited as to compel such youth to take to the sea or cities, or go abroad, to gain that livelihood which the neighbourhood in which they have been reared denies to them. In the same manner do these Gipsies look back to the tent from which they, or their fathers, have sprung. They carry the language, the associations, and the sympathies of their race, and their peculiar feelings toward the community, with them; and, as residents of towns, have generally greater facilities, from others of their race residing near them, for perpetuating their language, than when strolling over the country.

The prejudice of their fellow creatures, which clings to the race to which they belong, almost overwhelms some of them at times; but it is only momentary; for such is the independence and elasticity of their nature, that they rise from under it, as self-complacent and proud as ever. They in such cases resort to the *tu quoque*—the *tit for tat* argument as regards their enemies, and ask, "What is this white race, after all? What were their forefathers a few generations ago? the Highlands a nest of marauding thieves, and the Borders little better. Or society at the present day—what is it but a compound of deceit and hypocrisy? People say that the Gipsies steal. True; some of them steal chickens, vegetables, and such things; but what is that compared to the robbery of widows and orphans, the lying and cheating of traders, the swindling, the robberies, the murders, the ignorance, the squalor, and the debaucheries of so many of the white race? What are all these compared to the simple vices of the Gipsies? What is the ancestry they boast of, compared, in point of antiquity, to ours? People may despise the Gipsies, but they certainly despise all others not of their own race: the veriest beggar Gipsy, without shoes to his feet, considers himself better than the queen that sits upon the throne. People say that Gipsies are blackguards. Well, if some of them are blackguards,

they are at least illustrious blackguards as regards descent, and so in fact; for they never rob each other, and far less do they rob or ruin those of their own family." And they conclude that the odium which clings to the race is but a prejudice. Still, they will deny that they are Gipsies, and will rather almost perish than let any one, not of their own race, know that they speak their language in their own households and among their own kindred. They will even deny or at least hide it from many of their own race.

For all these reasons, the most appropriate word to apply to modern Gipsyism, and especially British Gipsyism, and more especially Scottish Gipsyism, is to call it a caste, and a kind of masonic society, rather than any particular mode of life. And it is necessary that this distinction should be kept in mind, otherwise the subject will appear contradictory.

The most of these Gipsies are unknown to the public as Gipsies. The feeling in question is, for the most part, on the side of the Gipsies themselves; they think that more of them is known than actually is. In that respect a kind of nightmare continually clings to them; while their peculiarly distant, clannish, and odd habits create a kind of separation between them and the other inhabitants, which the Gipsy is naturally apt to construe as proceeding from a different cause. Frequently, all that is said about them amounts only to a whisper among some of the families in the community in which they live, and which is confidentially passed around among themselves, from a dread of personal consequences. Sometimes the native families say among themselves, "Why should we make allusion to their kith and kin? They seem decent people, and attend church like ourselves; and it would be cruel to cast up their descent to them, and damage them in the estimation of the world. Their cousins, (or second cousins, as it may be,) travel the country in the old Tinkler fashion, no doubt; but what has that to do with them?" The estimate of such people never, or hardly ever, goes beyond the simple idea of their being "descended from Tinklers;" few have the most distant idea that they are Gipsies, and speak the Gipsy language among themselves. It is certain that a Gipsy can be a good man, as the world goes, nay, a very good man, and glory in being a Gipsy, but not to the public.

He will adhere to his ancient language, and talk it in his own family ; and he has as much right to do so, as, for example, a Highlander has to speak Gaelic in the Lowlands, or when he goes abroad, and teach it to his children. And he takes a greater pride in doing it, for thus he reasons : " What is English, French, Gaelic, or any other living language, compared to mine? Mine will carry me through every part of the known world : wherever a man is to be found, there is my language spoken. I will find a brother in every part of the world on which I may set my foot ; I will be welcomed and passed along wherever I may go. Freemasonry indeed ! what is masonry compared to the brotherhood of the Gipsies? A language—a whole language—is its pass-word. I almost worship the idea of being a member of a society into which I am initiated by my blood and language. I would not be a man if I did not love my kindred, and cherish in my heart that peculiarity of my race (its language) which casts a halo of glory around it, and makes it the wonder of the world !"

The feeling alluded to induces some of these Gipsies to change their residences or go abroad. I heard of one family in Canada, of whom a Scotchman spoke somewhat in the following way : " I know them to be Gipsies. They remind me of a brood of wild turkeys, hatched under a tame bird ; it will take the second or third descent to bring them to resemble, in some of their ways, the ordinary barn-door fowl. They are very restless and queer creatures, and move about as if they were afraid that every one was going to tramp on their corns." But it is in large towns they feel more at home. They then form little communities among themselves ; and by closely associating, and sometimes huddling together, they can more easily perpetuate their language, as I have already said, than by straggling, twos or threes, through the country. But their quarrelsome disposition frequently throws an obstacle in the way of such associations. Secret as they have been in keeping their language from even being heard by the public while wanderers, they are much more so since they have settled in towns.

The origin of the Gipsies has given rise, in recent times, to many speculations. The most plausible one, however, seems to be that they are from Hindostan ; an opinion our

author supports so well, that we are almost bound to acquiesce in it. In these controversies regarding the origin of the Gipsies, very little regard seems to have been had to what they say of themselves. It is curious that in every part of Europe they have been called, and are now called, Egyptians. No trace can now be found of any enquiry made as to their origin, if such there was made, when they first appeared in Europe. They seem then to have been taken at their word, and to have passed current as Egyptians. But in modern times their country has been denied them, owing to a total dissimilarity between their language and any of the dialects of modern Egypt. A very intelligent Gipsy informed me that his race sprung from a body of men—a cross between the Arabs and Egyptians—that left Egypt in the train of the Jews.* In consulting the record of Moses, I find it said, in Ex. xii. 38, “and a mixed multitude went up also with them” (the Jews, out of Egypt). Very little is said of this mixed multitude. In Lev. xxiv. 10, mention is made of the son of an Israelitish woman, by an Egyptian, being stoned to death for blasphemy, which would almost imply that a marriage had taken place previous to leaving Egypt. After this occurrence, it is said in Num. xi. 4, “and the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting” for flesh. That would imply that they had not amalgamated with the Jews, but were only among them. The Scriptures say nothing of what became of this mixed multitude after the Jews separated from them (Neh. xiii. 3), and leave us only to form a conjecture relative to their destiny.

We naturally ask, what could have induced this mixed multitude to leave Egypt? and the natural reply is, that their motive was the same that led to the exodus of the Jews—a desire to escape from slavery. No commentator that I have read gives a plausible reason for the mixed multitude leaving Egypt with the Jews. Scott, besides venturing four suppositions, advances a fifth, that “some left because they were distressed or discontented.” But that seems to fall infinitely short of the true reason. Adam Clark says, “Probably they were refugees who came to sojourn in Egypt, because of the dearth which had obliged

* The intelligent reader will not differ with me as to the weight to be attached to the Gipsy's remark on this point.

them to emigrate from their own countries." But that dearth occurred centuries before the time of the exodus ; so that those refugees, if such there were, who settled in Egypt during the famine, could have returned to their own countries generations before the time of that event. Scott says, "It is probable some left Egypt because it was desolate ;" and Henry, "Because their country was laid waste by the plagues." But the desolation was only partial ; for we are told that "He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh, made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses ;" by which means they escaped destruction from the hail, which affected only those remaining in the field. We are likewise told that, although the barley and flax were smitten by the same hail-storm, the wheat and rye, not being grown up, were left untouched. These two latter (besides fish, roots and vegetables) would form the staples of the food of the Egyptians ; to say nothing of the immense quantities in the granaries of the country. If the Egyptians could not find bread in their own country, how were they to obtain it by accompanying the Jews into a land of which they knew nothing, and which had to be conquered before it could be possessed ? Where were they to procure bread to support them on the journey, if it was not to be had at home ?

The other reasons given by these commentators for the departure of the mixed multitude from Egypt are hardly worth controverting, when we consider the social manners and religious belief of the Egyptians. We are told that, for being shepherds, the Israelites were an abomination unto the Egyptians (Gen. xlv. 34) ; and that the Egyptians considered it an abomination to eat bread with a Hebrew, (Gen. xliii. 32,) so supreme was the reign of caste and of nationality at that period in Egypt. The sacrifices of the Jews were also an abomination to the Egyptians (Ex. viii. 26). The Hebrews were likewise influenced by feelings peculiar to themselves, which would render any alliances or even associations between them and their oppressors extremely improbable ; but if such there should have been, the issue would be incorporated with the Hebrews.

There could thus be no personal motive for any of the Egyptians to accompany the Hebrews ; and as little could there be of that which pertains to the religious ; for, as a

people, they had become so "vain in their imaginations," and had "their foolish hearts so darkened," as to worship almost every created thing—bulls, birds, serpents, leeks, onions and garlic. Such a people were almost as well nigh devoid of a motive springing from a sense of elevated religion, as were the beasts, the reptiles and the vegetables which they worshipped. A miracle performed before the eyes of such a people would have no more salutary or lasting influence than would a flash of lightning before the eyes of many a man in every day life ; it might prostrate them for a moment, but its effects would be as transitory. Like the Jews themselves, at a subsequent time, they might credit the miracle to Beelzebub, the prince of devils ; and, like the Gergesenes, rise up in a body and beseech Moses and his people to "depart out of their coasts." Indeed, after the slaying of the first-born of the Egyptians, we are told that "the Egyptians were urgent upon the people that they might send them out of the land in haste ; for, they said, We be all dead men." Considering how hard a matter it was for Moses to urge the Jews to undertake the exodus ; considering their stiff-necked and perverse grumbling at all that befell them ; notwithstanding that to them "pertained the fathers, the adoption, the glory and the covenant ;" the commands and the bones of Joseph ; the grievous bondage they were enduring, and the almost daily recourse to which Moses had for a miracle to strengthen their faith and resolution to proceed ; and we will perceive the impossibility of the "mixed multitude" leaving Egypt on any ground of religion.

This principle might even be urged further. If we consider the reception which was given to the miracles of Christ as "a son over his own house, and therefore worthy of more glory than Moses, who was but a servant," we will conclude that the miracles wrought by Moses, although personally felt by the Egyptians, would have as little lasting effect upon them as had those of the former upon the Jews themselves ; they would naturally lead to the Hebrews being allowed to depart, but would serve no purpose of inducing the Egyptians to go with them. For if a veil was mysteriously drawn over the eyes of the Jews at the advent of Christ, which, in a negative sense, hid the Messiah from them (Mark iv. 11, 12 ; Matt. xi. 25, 26 ; and John xii. 39,

40), how much more might it not be said, "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts," and let the people of Israel go, "till they would thrust them out hence altogether;" and particularly so when the object of Moses' mission was to redeem the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, and spoil and smite the Egyptians.

The only reasonable conclusion to which we can come, as regards a motive for the "mixed multitude" leaving Egypt along with the Jews, is, that being slaves like themselves, they took advantage of the opportunity, and slipped out with them.*

The Jews, on being reduced to a state of bondage, were employed by Pharaoh to "build treasure cities, and work in mortar and brick, and do all manner of service in the field," besides being "scattered abroad through all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble in place of straw," wherewith to make their tale of bricks. In this way they would come much in contact with the other slaves of the country; and, as "adversity makes strange bed-fellows," they would naturally prove communicative to their fellow-sufferers, and expatiate on the history of their people, from the days of Abraham downward, were it only from a feeling of vanity to make themselves appear superior to what they would consider the ordinary dross around them. They would also naturally allude to their future prospects, and the positive promise, or at least general idea, which they had of their God effecting their deliverance, and leading them into a country (Gen. i. 24, 25) where all the miseries they were then enduring would be forgotten. They would do that more especially after Moses had returned from his father-in-law in Midian, to bring them out of Egypt; for we are told, in Ex. iv. 29-31, that the elders of the children of Israel were called together and informed of the intended redemption, and that all the people believed. By such means as these would the minds of some of the other slaves of Egypt be inflamed at the very idea of freedom being perhaps in immediate prospect for so many of their fellow-bondsmen.

* Since the above was written, I have read Hengstenberg on the Pentateuch, who supposes that the "mixed multitude" were an inferior order of workmen, employed, like the Jews, as slaves, in the building of the pyramids.

Thereafter happened the many plagues ; the causes of which must have been more or less known to the Egyptians generally, from the public manner in which Moses would make his demands (Ex. x. 7) ; and consequently to their slaves ; for many of the slaves would be men of intelligence, as is common in oriental countries. Some of these slaves would, in all probability, watch, with fear and trembling, the dreadful drama played out (Ex. ix. 20). Others would perhaps, give little heed to the various sayings of the Hebrews at the time they were uttered ; the plagues would, perhaps, have little effect in reminding them of them. As they experienced their effects, they might even feel exasperated toward the Hebrews for being the cause of them ; still it is more probable that they sympathized with them, as fellow-bondsmen, and murmured against Pharaoh for their existence and greater manifestation. But the positive order, nay the entreaty, for the departure of the Israelites, and the passage before their eyes of so large a body of slaves to obtain their freedom, would induce many of them to follow them ; for they would, in all likelihood, form no higher estimate of the movement than that of merely gaining that liberty which slaves, in all nations, and under all circumstances, do continually sigh after.

The character of Moses alone was a sufficient guarantee to the slaves of Egypt that they might trust themselves to his leadership and protection (not to speak of the miraculous powers which he displayed in his mission) ; for we are told that, besides being the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in word and deed. Having been, according to Josephus, a great commander in the armies of Egypt, he must have been the means of reducing to bondage many of the slaves, or the parents of the slaves, then living in Egypt. At the time of the exodus we are told that he was " very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people " (Ex. xi. 3). The burying of the " first-born " was not a circumstance likely to prevent a slave gaining his freedom amid the dismay, the moaning, and groaning, and howling throughout the land of Egypt. The circumstance was even the more favourable for his escape, owing to the Hebrews being allowed to go, till it pleased God again to harden and stir up Pharaoh to pursue them

(Ex. xiv. 2-5 and 8), in order that his host might be overthrown in the Red Sea.

The Jews, while in Egypt, seem to have been reduced to a state of serfdom only—crown slaves, not chattels personal ; which would give them a certain degree of respect in the eyes of the ordinary slaves of the country, and lead them, owing to the dignity of their descent, to look down with disdain upon the “mixed multitude” which followed them. While it is said that they were “scattered over the land of Egypt,” we are told, in Ex. ix. 4, that the murrain touched not the cattle of Israel ; and in the 26th verse, that “in the land of Goshen, where the people of Israel were, there was no hail.” And Moses said to Pharaoh, “Our cattle also shall go with us ; there shall not an hoof be left behind ; for thereof we must take to serve the Lord our God” (Ex. x. 26). From this we would naturally conclude, that such of the Jews only as were capable of work, were scattered over the land of Egypt to do the work of Pharaoh, while the rest were left in the land of Goshen. By both the Egyptians and their slaves, the Hebrews would be looked upon as a mysterious people, which the former would be glad to send out of the land, owing to the many plagues which they had been the cause of being sent upon them ; and while they got quit of them, as they did, there would be no earthly motive for the Egyptians to follow them, through a wilderness, into a country of which the Hebrews themselves knew nothing. But it would be different with their slaves ; they had everything to hope from a change of condition, and would readily avail themselves of the chance to effect it.

The very term “mixed multitude” implies slaves ; for the Hebrew word *hasaphsoph*, as translated by Bochartus, means *populi colluvies undecunque collecta*—“the dregs or scum of the people gathered together from all parts.” But this interpretation is most likely the literal meaning of a figurative expression, which was intended to describe a body of men such as the slaves of Egypt must have been, that is, a mixture that was compounded of men from almost every part of the world known to the Egyptians ; the two principal ingredients of which must have been what may be called the Egyptian and Semitic. Moses seems to have used the word in question in consequence of the vexation and snare which the mixed multitude proved to him, by bringing upon the camp

of his people the plague, inflicted, in consequence of their sins, in the midst of them. At the same time the Hebrews were very apt to term "dregs and scum" all who did not proceed from the loins of their father, Abraham. But I am inclined to believe that the bulk or nucleus of the mixed multitude would consist of slaves who were located in Goshen, or its neighbourhood, when the Jews were settled there by Pharaoh. These would be a mixture of the shepherd kings and native Egyptians, held by the former as slaves, who would naturally fall into the hands of the Egyptian monarch during his gradual reconquest of the country; and they would be held by the pure Egyptians in as little esteem as the Jews themselves, both being, in a measure, of the shepherd race. In this way it may be claimed that the Gipsies are even descendants of the shepherd kings.

After leaving Egypt, the Hebrews and the "mixed multitude," in their exuberance of feeling at having gained their freedom, and witnessed the overthrow of their common oppressor in the Red Sea, would naturally have everything in common, till they regained their powers of reflection, and began to think of their destiny, and the means of supporting so many individuals, in a country in which provisions could hardly be collected for the company of an ordinary caravan. Then their difficulties would begin. It was enough for Moses to have to guide the Hebrews, whose were the promises, without being burdened and harassed by those who followed them. Then we may reasonably assume that the mixed multitude began to clamour for flesh, and lead the Hebrews to join with them; in return for which a plague was sent upon the people. They were unlikely to submit to be led by the hand of God, and be fed on angels' food, and, like the Hebrews, leave their carcasses in the wilderness; for their religious sentiments, if, as slaves of Egypt, they had religious sentiments, would be very low indeed, and would lead them to depend upon themselves, and leave the deserts of Arabia, for some other country more likely to support them and their children. Undoubtedly the two people then separated, as Abraham and Lot parted when they came out of Egypt.

How to shake off this mixed multitude must have caused Moses many an anxious thought. Possibly his father-in-law, Jethro, from the knowledge and sagacity which he displayed

in forming the government of Moses himself, may have assisted him in arriving at the conclusion which he must have so devoutly wished. To take them into the promised land with him was impossible ; for the command of God, given in regard to Ishmael, the son of Abraham, by Hagar the Egyptian, and which was far more applicable to the mixed multitude, must have rung in his ears : " Cast out this bondwoman and her son, for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, Isaac ; " " for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. " As slaves of Egypt they would not return to that country ; they would not go north, for that was the heritage of the people of Israel, which had to be wrested from the fierce tribes of Palestine ; they would not go north-east, for there lay the powerful empire of Assyria, or the germs out of which it sprung ; they could not go south, for the ocean hemmed them in, in that direction ; and their only alternative was to proceed east, through Arabia Petrea, along the gulf of Persia, through the Persian desert, into northern Hindostan, where they formed the Gipsy caste, and whence they issued, after the lapse of so many centuries, in possession of the language of Hindostan, and spread themselves over the earth. What a strange sensation passes through the mind, when such a subject is contemplated ! Jews and Gipsies having, in a sense, the same origin, and, after such vicissitudes, meeting each other, face to face, under circumstances so greatly alike, in almost every part of the world, upward of 3000 years after they parted company. What destiny awaited the Jews themselves on escaping from Egypt ? They had either to subdue and take the place of some other tribe, or be reduced to a state of slavery by it and perhaps others combined ; or they might possibly have been befriended by some great empire as tributaries ; or failing these three, what remained for them was the destiny that befell the Gipsies.

On leaving Egypt, the Gipsies would possess a common language, which would hold them together as a body ; as slaves under the society of an Egyptian monarchy, they would have few, if any, opinions of a religious nature ; and they would have but little idea of the laws of *meum* and *tuum*. The position in which they would find themselves placed, and the circumstances surrounding them, would necessitate them to rob, steal, or appropriate whatever they

found to be necessary to their existence ; for whether they turned to the right hand or to the left, they would always find territory previously occupied, and property claimed by some one ; so that their presence would always be unwelcome, their persons an intrusion everywhere ; and having once started on their weary pilgrimage, as long as they maintained their personal independence, they would never attain, as a body, to any other position than they have done, in popular estimation, for the last four hundred and fifty years in Europe.

In entering Hindostan they would meet with a civilized people, governed by rigid caste, where they would have no alternative but to remain aloof from the other inhabitants. Then, as now, that country had many wandering tribes within its borders, and for which it is peculiarly favourable. Whatever might have been the amount of civilization which some of the Gipsies brought with them from Egypt, it could not be otherwise than of that *quasi* nature which generally characterizes that of slaves, and which would rapidly degenerate into a kind of barbarism, under the change of circumstances in which they found themselves placed. As runaway slaves, they would naturally be shy and suspicious, and be very apt to betake themselves to mountains, forests and swamps, and hold as little intercourse with the people of the country in which they were, as possible. Still, having been reared within a settled and civilized state, they would naturally hang around some other one, and nestle within it, if the face of the country, and the character and ways of the people, admitted of it. Having been bondsmen, they would naturally become lazy after gaining their freedom, and revel in the wild liberty of nature. They would do almost anything for a living rather than work ; and whatever they could lay their hands on would be fairly come by, in their imagination. But to carry out this mode of life, they would naturally have recourse to some ostensible employment, to enable them to travel through the country, and secure the toleration of its inhabitants. Here their Egyptian origin would come to their assistance ; for as slaves of that country, they must have had many among them who would be familiar with horses, and working in metals, for which ancient Egypt was famous ; not to speak of some of the occult sciences which they would carry with them from

that country. In the first generation their new habits and modes of life would become chronic ; in the second generation they would become hereditary ; and from this strange phenomenon would spring a race that is unique in the history of the human family. What origin could be more worthy of the Gipsies ? What origin more philosophical ?

Arriving in India a foreign caste, the Gipsies would naturally cling to their common origin, and speak their common language, which, in course of ages, would be forgotten, except occasional words, which would be used by them as catch-words. At the present day my Gipsy acquaintances inform me that, in Great Britain, five out of every ten of their words are nothing but common Hindostanee. How strange would it be if some of the other words of their language were those used by the people of Egypt under the Pharaohs. Mr. Borrow says : " Is it not surprising that the language of *Petulengro*, (an English Gipsy,) is continually coming to my assistance whenever I appear to be at a loss with respect to the derivation of crabbed words. I have made out crabbed words in *Æschylus* by means of his speech ; and even in my Biblical researches I have derived no slight assistance from it." " Broken, corrupted and half in ruins as it is, it was not long before I found that it was an original speech, far more so, indeed, than one or two others of high name and celebrity, which, up to that time, I had been in the habit of regarding with respect and veneration. Indeed, many obscure points connected with the vocabulary of these languages, and to which neither classic nor modern lore afforded any clue, I thought I could now clear up by means of this strange, broken tongue, spoken by people who dwell among thickets and furze bushes, in tents as tawny as their faces, and whom the generality of mankind designate, and with much semblance of justice, as thieves and vagabonds."

A difficulty somewhat similar to the origin of the Gipsies has been started in reference to their language ; whether it is a speech distinct from any other surrounding it, or a few slang words or expressions connected together by the usual languages of the countries in which the race is to be found. The slightest consideration will remove the doubt, and lead us to the former conclusion. It is true there must needs be some native words mixed up with it ; for what language, in

ancient or modern times, has come down free of a mixture with others? If that be the case with languages classified, written, and spoken in a community, with no disturbing element near it to corrupt it, is it to be expected that the speech of a people like the Gipsies can be free of similar additions or substitutions, when it possesses none of these advantages for the preservation of its entirety and purity? From the length of time the people have been in Europe, and the frequency of intercourse which they have been forced by circumstances, in modern times especially, to have with its natives, it would appear beyond measure surprising that even a word of their language is spoken at all. And this fact adds great weight to Sir Walter Scott's remark, when he says that "their language is a great mystery;" and to that of Dr. Bright, when he speaks of its existence as being "little short of the miraculous." But when we consider, on strictly philosophical principles, the phenomenon of the perpetuation of the Gipsy language, we will find that there is nothing so very wonderful about it after all. The race have always associated closely and exclusively together; and their language has become to them like the worship of a household god—hereditary, and is spoken among themselves under the severest of discipline. It is certain that it is spoken at the present day, by some of the race, nearly as well as the Gaelic of many of the immediate descendants of the emigrants in some of the small Highland settlements in America, when it has not been learned by book, even to the extent of conversing on any subject of ordinary life, without apparently using English words. But, as is common with people possessing two languages, the Gipsies often use them interchangeably in expressing the smallest idea. Besides the way mentioned by which the Gipsy language has been corrupted, there is another one peculiar to all speeches, and which is, that few tongues are so copious as not to stand in need of foreign words, either to give names to things or wants unknown in the place where the language originated, or greater meaning or elucidation to a thing than it is capable of; and preëminently so in the case of a barbarous people, with few ideas beyond the commonest wants of daily life, entering states so far advanced toward that point of civilization which they have now reached. But the question as to the extent of the Gipsy language never can be con-

clusively settled, until some able philologist has the unrestricted opportunity of daily intercourse with the race ; or, as a thing more to be wished than obtained, some Gipsy take to suitable learning, and confer a rarity of information upon the reader of history everywhere : for the attempt at getting a single word of the language from the Gipsies, is, in almost every case, impracticable. Sir Walter Scott seems to have had an intention of writing an account of the Gipsies himself ; for, in a letter to Murray, as given by Lockhart, he writes : " I have been over head and ears in work this summer, or I would have sent the Gipsies ; indeed I was partly stopped by finding it impossible to procure a few words of their language." For this reason, the words furnished in this work, although few, are yet numerous, when the difficulties in the way of getting them are considered. Under the chapter of Language will be found some curious anecdotes of the manner in which these were collected.

Of the production itself little need be said. Whatever may be the opinion of the public in regard to it, this may be borne in mind, that the collecting of the materials out of which it is formed was attended with much trouble, and no little expense, but with a singular degree of pleasure, to the author ; and that but for the urgent and latest request of him whom, when alive or dead, Scotchmen have always delighted to honour, it might never have assumed its present form. It is what it professes to be—a history, in which the subject has been stripped of everything pertaining to fiction or even colouring ; so that the reader will see depicted, in their true character, this singular people, in the description of whom, owing to the suspicion and secrecy of their nature, writers generally have indulged in so much that is trifling and even fabulous.

Such as the work is, it is offered as a contribution toward the filling up of that void in literature to which Dr. Bright alludes, in the introduction to his travels in Hungary, when, in reference to Hoyland's Survey, and some scattered notices of the Gipsies in periodicals, he says : " We may hope at some time to collect, satisfactorily, the history of this extraordinary race." It is likewise intended as a response to the call of a writer in Blackwood, in which he says : " *Our duty is rather to collect and store up the raw materials of litera-*

ture—to gather into our repository scattered facts, hints and observations—which more elaborate and learned authors may afterwards work up into the dignified tissue of history or science.”

I deem it proper to remark that, in editing the work, I have taken some liberties with the manuscript. I have, for example, recast the Introduction, re-arranged some of the materials, and drawn more fully, in some instances, upon the author's authorities ; but I have carefully preserved the facts and sentiments of the original. I may have used some expressions a little familiar and perhaps not over-refined in their nature ; but my excuse for that is, that they are illustrative of a subject that allows the use of them.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION.

THE discovery and history of barbarous races of men, besides affording exquisite gratification to the general mind of civilized society, have always been looked upon as important means toward a right understanding of the history of our species, and the relation in which it stands to natural and revealed theology ; and in their prosecution have produced, in latter times, many instances of the most indefatigable disinterestedness and greatest efforts of true courage of which our nature is capable ; many, in the person of the traveller, philanthropist and missionary, cheerfully renouncing in their pursuit every comfort of civilized life, braving death itself in every variety of form, and leaving their bones on the distant shore, or far away in the unknown interior of the dreary continent, without a trace of their fate to console those most dearly attached to them. The result of the discoveries hitherto made has invariably confirmed the conclusions of a few superior minds, formed without the assistance drawn from such a source, that under whatever circumstances man is placed, and whatever advantages he may enjoy, there is very little real difference between the characters, intrinsically considered, of the savage and man in what is considered a civilized community. There is this difference between what may be called barbarism, not unfrequently to be met with in a civilized community, springing from the depravity natural to man, and what obtains in a barbarous tribe or nation as such, that, in the former, it forms the exception ; the brother, the father, or the son of the person of it often exhibiting the most opposite nature and conduct ; while, in the latter, it forms the rule, and what the individual cannot, in a sense, avoid. But, in making this distinction, is there nothing to be found within the former sphere somewhat anomalous to the position thus presented ?

The subject of the following enquiry forms the exception,

and from its being the only instance to be met with in the history of Europe, it may be said to merit the greatest consideration of the statesman, the historian, the philosopher, and the Christian.

It does not appear possible, from the peculiar mould in which the European mind has been cast, for it to have remained in that state of immobility which, from the remotest antiquity, seems to have characterized that of Asia ; in which continent society has remained torpid and inactive, contented with what it has inherited, without making any effort at change or advancement. This peculiarity of character, in connexion with the influences of the Christian religion, seems to have had the effect of bringing about that thorough amalgamation of races and ideas in the various countries of Europe in which more than one people happened to occupy the same territory, or come under the jurisdiction of the same government, when no material difference in religion existed. In no country has such an amalgamation been more happily consummated than in our own ; if not altogether as to blood, at least as to feeling, the more important thing of the two ; the physical differences, in occasional instances, appearing in some localities, on the closest observation of those curious individuals who make such a subject the object of their learned researches.

Notwithstanding what has been said, how does it happen that in Europe, but especially in our own country, there exists, and has for four hundred years existed, a pretty numerous body of men distinct in their feelings from the general population, and some of them in a state of barbarism nearly as great as when they made their appearance amongst us ? Such a thing would appear to us in no way remarkable in the stationary condition so long prevalent in Asia ; where, in the case of India, for example, are to be found, inhabiting the same territory, a heterogeneous population, made up of the remnants of many nations ; where so many languages are spoken, and religions or superstitions professed, and the people divided into so many castes, which are separated from each other on the most trivial, and, to Europeans, ridiculous and generally incomprehensible points ; some eating together, and others not ; some eating mutton, and others not ; some beef and fowls, others vegetables, milk, butter and eggs, but no flesh or fish ; those going to sea not

associating with those remaining at home ; some not following the occupation of others ; and all showing the most determined antipathy to associate with each other ;—where, from the numerous facilities so essential toward the perpetuation of peculiar modes of life, and the want of the powerful elements of assimilation and amalgamation so prominent in our division of the human race, a people may continue in a stereotyped state of mind and habits for an indefinite length of time. But in a country that is generally looked upon as the bulwark of the Reformation, and the stronghold of European civilization, how does it happen that we find a people, resembling in their nature, though not in the degree, the all but fabulous tribe that was lately to be found in the dreary wastes of Newfoundland, flying from the approach, and crossing the imagination of the fishermen like a spectre ? Or like the wild men of the jungle, in some of the oceanic parts of Asia, having no homes, roaming during the dry season in the forests, and sleeping under or on the branches of trees, and in the rainy season betaking themselves to caves or sheltering beneath rocks, making their beds of leaves, and living on what they can precariously find, such as roots and wild honey ; yet, under the influence of the missionary, many of them now raising crops, building dwellings, erecting school-houses, keeping the Sabbath, and praising God ? But some of the Gipsies with us may be said to do few of these things. They live among us, yet are not of us ; they come in daily contact with us, yet keep such distance from the community as a wild fowl, that occasionally finds its way into the farm-yard, does in shrinking from the close scrutiny of the husbandman. They cling like bats to ruined houses, caves, and old lime-kilns ; and pitch their tents in dry water-courses, quarry-holes, or other sequestered places, by the way-side, or on the open moor, and even on dung-heaps for the warmth to be derived from them during the winter season, and live under the bare boughs of the forest during the summer ;—yet amid all this apparent misery, through fair means or foul, they fare well, and lead what some call a happy life ; while everything connected with them is most solicitously wrapt up in inscrutable mystery. These Gipsies exhibit to the European mind the most inexplicable moral problem on record ; in so far as such phenomena are naturally expected to be found among a people whom the rays of civilization have

never reached ; while, in the case of the Gipsies, the first principles of nature would seem to be set at defiance.

“And thus 'tis ever ; what's within our ken,
Owl-like, we blink at, and direct our search
To farthest Inde, in quest of novelties ;
Whilst here at home, upon our very thresholds,
Ten thousand objects hurtle into view,
Of interest wonderful.”

But to give a fair description of the tented Gipsy life, I cannot employ more appropriate language than that of Doctor Bright, when, in reference to the English Gipsies, he says : “I am confident that we are apt to appreciate much too lightly the actual happiness enjoyed by this class of people, who, beneath their ragged tents, in the pure air of the heath, may well excite the envy of many of the poor, though better provided with domestic accommodation, in the unwholesome haunts of the town. At the approach of night, they draw around their humble but often abundant board, and then retiring to their tent, leave a faithful dog to guard its entrance. With the first rays of morning, they again meet the day, pursue their various occupations, or, rolling up their tents and packing all their property on an ass, set forward to seek the delights of some fresh heath, or the protection of some shaded copse. I leave it to those who have visited the habitations of the poor, to draw a comparison between the activity, the free condition, and the pure air enjoyed by the Gipsy, and the idleness, the debauchery, and the filth in which the majority of the poorer classes are enveloped.”—“No sooner does a stranger approach their fire on the heath, than a certain reserve spreads itself through the little family. The women talk to him in mystic language ; they endeavour to amuse him with secrets of futurity ; they suspect him to be a spy upon their actions ; and he generally departs as little acquainted with their true character as he came. Let this, however, wear away ; let him gain their confidence, and he will find them conversable, amusing, sensible and shrewd ; civil, but without servility ; proud of their independence ; and able to assign reasons for preferring their present condition to any other in civilized society. He will find them strongly attached to each other, and free from many cares which too often render the married life a source of discontent.”

In what direction may we look for the causes of such an anomaly in the history of our common civilization? This question, however, will be discussed by and by: in the meantime let us consider the fact itself.

(In the early part of the fifteenth century there first appeared in Europe large hordes of a people of singular complexion and hair, and mode of life—apparently an Asiatic race—which, in spite of the sanguinary efforts of the governments of the countries through which they passed, continued to spread over the continent, and have existed in large numbers to this day; many of them in the same condition, and following the same modes of life, now as then; and preserving their language, if not in its original purity, yet without its having lost its character. This circumstance has given rise in recent times to several researches, with no certain result, as to the country which they left on entering Europe, and still less as to the place or the circumstances of their origin. The latter is not to be wondered at, when it is considered that, in the instances of even the most polished nations of antiquity, nothing is to be found as to their origin beyond what is contained in the myths and fables of their earliest poets and historians. But considering the traces that have been left of the origin and early history of the people and kingdoms of Europe, subsequent to the fall of the Roman Empire, amid the barbarism and confusion attending their establishment, and, in many respects, the darkness immediately and for a long time following it, we would naturally think that, for an event happening so recently as the fifteenth century, some reliable traces would have been discovered and bequeathed to us on a subject that has baffled the antiquarians of modern times.

If, however, there is any doubt as to the country which they left on entering Europe, and their place of origin, there remains for us to consider the people generally, and in an especial manner those who have located themselves in Scotland; and give an account of their subsequent history in its various aspects, and their present condition. But before doing that, it would be well to take a general but cursory view of the political as well as social condition of Europe at the time they made their appearance in it, so as, in some measure, to account for the circumstance of no trace being left of their previous history; form an estimate of the rela-

tive position in which they have stood to its general population since ; and attempt to realize the feeling with which they have always been regarded by our own people, so as to account for that singular degree of dread and awe which have always been associated with the mention of their name ; the foundation of which has been laid in infancy.)

That which most forcibly strikes the mind of the student, in reading the history of the age in which the Gipsies entered Europe, is the political turmoil in which nearly the whole of the continent seems to have been embroiled for the greater part of a century. The desperate wars waged by England against what has been termed her natural enemy, for the recovery and retention of her ancient continental possessions, and the struggle of the other for her bare existence ; the long and bloody civil wars of England, and the distracted state of France, torn with dissensions within, and menaced at various points from without ; the long and fanatical struggle of religion and race, between the Spaniards and their invaders, for the possession of the peninsula ; the brave stand made by the Swiss for that independence so much theirs by nature ; the religious wars of the Hussites, and the commotions throughout central Europe ; the perpetual internal feuds of the corrupt and turbulent southern republics ; the approaching dissolution of the dissolute Byzantine empire ; the appalling progress of that terrible power that had emerged from the wilds of Asia, subdued the empire, and threatened Europe from its vulnerable point ; all these seem to have been enough to have engrossed the mental energies of the various countries of Europe, and prevented any notice being taken of the appearance of the race in question.

But over and above these convulsions, sufficient as they were to exclusively engage the attention of the small amount of cultivated intellect then in the world, there was one that was calculated even to paralyze the clergy, to whom, in that age, fell the business of recording passing events, and which seems to have prevented their even taking notice of important matters in the history of that time. I mean the schism that for so long rent the church into fragments, the greatest schism, indeed, that the world ever saw, when, for so many years, two and even three Popes reigned at once, each anathematizing and excommunicating the other,

for a schism which, after an infinity of intrigues, was ultimately so happily patched up to the comfort of the church. On the death of Urban V, Gregory XI became Pope, but soon after died, and was succeeded by Urban VI; but the Cardinals, who were in the French interest, after treating him as Pope for a short time, annulled the whole proceedings, on the plea of having been constrained in the election by the turbulence of the Roman populace, but really on account of the extraordinary harshness with which he began his reign, and chose one of themselves in his stead, under the name of Clement VII. The former remained at Rome, and was supported by Italy, the Empire, England and the North; while Clement proceeded to Avignon, and was acknowledged by France, Spain, Scotland, and Sicily. Urban was respectively succeeded by Boniface IX, Innocent VI, and Gregory XII; and Clement, at his death, in 1394, by Benedict XIII, the most implacable spirit in prolonging the schism, from whose authority France for a time withdrew, without acknowledging any other head, but afterwards returned, at the same time urging his resignation of the chair. At last the Cardinals, disgusted with the unprincipled dissimulation of both, and at their wits' end in devising a way to stay the scandal, and build up the influence of the whole church, then so rapidly sinking in the estimation of the world, amidst such unheard of calamities, deserted both, and summoned a council, which met at Pisa, and in which both were deposed, and another, in the person of Alexander V, elected to fill the chair. But in place of proving a remedy, the step rendered the schism still more furious. After that, John XXIII, successor to Alexander V, was reluctantly prevailed on to call a council, which accordingly met at Constance, in 1414, but in which he himself was deposed. Martin V being chosen, was succeeded by Eugenius IV. But the Fathers of Basle elected Felix V, thus renewing the schism, and dividing the church for some years, from France and the Empire observing a neutrality, while England adhered to Eugenius, Aragon and the smaller states to Felix; but the partisans of Felix gradually losing their influence, Nicholas V, the successor of Eugenius, after much cajolery, prevailed on him to resign his claim, and thus restored peace to the world.

At that time the kinds of learning taught were, in the

greater part of Europe, confined to few, being almost entirely monopolised by the clergy and a few laymen ; by the former for the dogmatism of the schools and the study of the canon law, and by the latter for civil jurisprudence and medicine. Even the sons of nobles were generally wholly illiterate, one of them, only, being educated, to act as the clerk of the family. We are even told of a noble, when a conspiracy was detected, with the name of his son attached to it, saying, "Thank God, none of my children were ever taught to write." The great mass of the people, and especially those of the lower classes, were as ignorant of direct educational training as a tribe of semi-barbarians at the present day. Many of the nobility, although as scantily educated as the lowest of our own people, and having as much difficulty in inditing an epistle as some of these would now have, would still admirably maintain their position in such a state of society, by the influence which their high birth and breeding, elevated bearing, superiority of character, and possession of domain, gave them ; and by the traditionary feudal awe that had sunk so deeply into the feelings of their comparatively, and often absolutely, abject dependents and followers, extending itself, when unaccompanied by overt acts of oppression, to the inhabitants of the smaller towns, where so many restraints surrounded their personal independence, from their precarious modes of living, owing to all so much depending on each other for a subsistence, and the endless jealousies prevailing among them.

At the same time all classes, although frequently possessing a sufficiency, if not an abundance, of the rough necessities of life, enjoyed nothing of the comfort and elegancies of subsequent times. The house of many a noble presented such a plainness in furnishing as a person, in very moderate circumstances, would now be almost ashamed to possess. The circumstances of the middle classes were much more lowly ; plain boards and wooden trenchers, few beds but many *shake-downs*, rough stools and no chairs, with wonderfully few apartments relative to the size of the family, and much sleeping on straw-heaps in the *cock-loft*, marked the style of living of a class now deemed very respectable. The huts of the poorest class were as often composed of "sticks and dirt" as any other material, with *plenishing* to correspond. There was a marked exception to this state

of comparative barbarism to be found, however, in some of the cities of Italy, and other parts of the Mediterranean, the seats of the flourishing republics of the middle ages ; arising not only from the affluence which follows in the wake of extended commerce and manufactures, but also from the feelings with which the wreck of a highly polished antiquity inspired a people in whom the seeds of the former civilization had not died out ; heightened, as it must have been, by the influence of the once celebrated, but then decaying, splendour which the court of the long line of eastern emperors shed over the countries lying contiguous to it. The inhabitants of the cities of the north, on the other hand, were marked by a degree of substantial wealth and comfort, sense and ease, civility and liberality, which were apt to distinguish a people situated as they were, without the traditions and objects, meeting the eye at every step in the south, of the greatest degree of culture in the polite arts of life unto which a people can attain. But, with the exception of the inhabitants of these cities, and some of those in a few of the cities of western Europe, the clergy and some of the laity, the people, as such, were sunk in deep ignorance and superstition, living in a state of which, in our favoured times, we can form no adequate conception. Then, life and property were held in little respect, and law trampled upon, even if it existed under more than the shadow of its present form ; and no roads existed but such as were for the greater part of the year impassable, and lay through forests, swamps and other uncultivated wastes, the resorts of numerous banditti. Then, almost no intercourse existed between the people of one part of a country and another, when all were exceedingly sanguinary and rude.

What wonder, then, that, under such circumstances, the race in question should have stolen into Europe unobserved, without leaving a trace of the circumstances connected with the movement ? The way by which they are supposed to have entered Western Europe was by Transylvania, a supposition which, if not true, is at least most likely. Although, when first publicly taken notice of in Europe, they were found to move about in large bands, it is unlikely that they would do that while entering, but only after having experienced the degree of toleration and hospitality which the representation of their condition called forth ; at least if we judge

from the cunning which they have displayed in moving about after their true character became known. Asia having been so long their home, where from time immemorial they are supposed to have wandered, they would have no misgiving, from their knowledge of its inhabitants, in passing through any part of it. But in contemplating an entry into Europe they must have paused, as one, without any experience of his own or of others, would in entering on the discovery of an unknown continent, and anxiously examined the merchants and travellers visiting Europe, on the various particulars of the country most essential to their prospects, and especially as to the characteristics of the people. There seems no reason for thinking that they were expelled from Asia against their will; and as little for supposing that they fled rather than submit to a particular creed, if we judge from the great readiness with which, in form, they have submitted to such in Europe, when it would serve their purpose. The only conclusion, in regard to their motive of migration, to which we can come, is, that having, in the course of time, gradually found their way to the confines of Western Asia, and most likely into parts of Northern Africa, and there heard of the growing riches of modern Europe, they, with the restlessness and unsettledness of their race, longed to reach the Eldorado of their hopes—a country teeming with what they were in quest of, where they would meet with no rivals of their own race to cross their path. The step must have been long and earnestly debated, possibly for generations, ere it was taken; spies after spies may have surveyed and reported on the country, and the movement been made the subject of many deliberations, till at last the influence, address, or resolution of some chief may have precipitated them upon it, possibly at a time when some accidental or unavoidable cause urged them to it. Nor would it be long ere their example was followed by others of the tribe; some from motives of friendship; others from jealousy at the idea of all the imagined advantages being reaped by those going before them; and others from the desire of revenging unsettled injuries, and jealousy combined. After the die had been cast, their first step would be to choose leaders to proceed before the horde, spy out the richness of the land, and organize stations for those to follow; and then continue the migration till all the horde had passed over. Considering

that the representative part of the Gipsies have retained their peculiarities almost uncontaminated, it is in the highest degree probable, it may even be assumed as certain, that this was the manner in which they entered Europe : at first stragglers, with systematic relays of stations and couriers, followed up by such small, yet numerous and closely following, companies, as almost to escape the notice of the authorities of the countries through which they passed ; a mode of travelling which they still pursue in Great Britain. But when any special obstacle was to be encountered in their journey—such, for example, as the hostility of the inhabitants of any particular place—they would concentrate their strength, so as to force their way through. Their next step would be to arrange among themselves the district of country each tribe was to occupy. After their arrival, they seem to have appeared publicly in large bands, growing emboldened by the generous reception which they met with for some time after their appearance ; and they seem to have had the sagacity to know, that if they secured the favour of the great, that of the small would necessarily follow.

But if the first appearance of the Gipsies in Europe had a different complexion from what I have conjectured, there are other causes to which may be attributed the fact of its not being known. Among these is to be found the distracted state of the Eastern Empire in its struggles with the Turks, which led to the capture of its capital, and the subversion of the Greek rule in the East. The literary and other men of note, scattered over the provinces, likely to chronicle such an event as the appearance of the Gipsies, must necessarily have betaken themselves to the capital, as each district submitted to the conquerors, and so lost the opportunity of witnessing the migration, under such circumstances as would have made it observable, assuming that the Gipsies travelled in large companies, which, under all the circumstances of the case, was not, on all occasions, likely. The surrounding countries having been the theatre of so many changes in the history of the human family, and the inhabitants having undergone so many changes of masters, leading to so many distinct races, from the intellectual and cultivated Greek to the barbarous Arab and dusky Moor, of so various hues and habits, many of whom would be found in such a city as Constantinople, what peculiarity was there about the Gipsies to

attract the notice of the haughty Greek, characterized as he was by all the feelings of disdain which his ancestors displayed in not even naming the Jews and early Christians? Then, if we consider the peculiar turn which the new-born literary pursuits of learned men assumed during that age—how it was exclusively confined to the restoration of the classics, and followed in Europe by the influx of the Greeks during the troubles of their country, we will find another reason for the manner of the first appearance of the Gipsies not being known. Nor is it to be expected that any light would be thrown on the subject by the memoirs of any of our own countrymen, visiting the East at a time when so little intercourse existed between the West and that part of the world; nothing perhaps beyond a commercial or maritime adventurer, under the flag of another nation, or one whose whole acquirements consisted in laying lance in rest and mounting the breach in an assault; it being a rare thing even to see an English ship in the Mediterranean during the whole of the fifteenth century.

That the Gipsies were a tribe of Hindoo *Sudras*, driven, by the cruelty of Timour, to leave Hindostan, is not for a moment to be entertained; for why should that conqueror have specially troubled himself with the *lowest* class of Hindoos? or why should they, in particular, have left Hindostan? It would have been the *ruling*, or at least the *higher*, classes of Hindoo society against which Timour would have exercised any acts of cruelty; the *lowest* would be pretty much beneath his notice. Not only do we not read of such a people as the Hindoos ever having left their country on any such account—for it is contrary to their genius and feelings of caste to do so—but the opinion that the Gipsies left India on Timour's account rests on no evidence whatever, beyond the simple circumstance that they were first taken notice of in Europe *about* the time of his overrunning India. Mr. Borrow very justly remarks: "It appears singular that if they left their native land to escape from Timour, they should never have mentioned, in the western world, the name of that scourge of the human race, nor detailed the history of their flight and sufferings, which assuredly would have procured them sympathy; the ravages of Timour being already but too well known in Europe." Still, Mr. Borrow does not venture to give reasons for the trustworthiness or

untrustworthiness of a passage in Arabschah's life of Timour, in which it is said that Gipsies were found in Samarcand at a time before that conqueror had even directed his thoughts to the invasion of India. The description given of these Zingari or Gipsies of Samarcand is as applicable to the Gipsies as possibly can be; for in it it is said, "Some were wrestlers, others gladiators, others pugilists. These people were much at variance, so that hostilities and battling were continually arising amongst them. Each band had its chief and subordinate officers." How applicable this description is to the Scottish Gipsies, down to so late a period as the end of last century!

If there is little reason for thinking that the Gipsies left India owing to the cruelties of Timour, there is less for supposing, as Mr. Borrow supposes, that their being called Egyptians originated, not with themselves, but with others; for he says that the tale of their being Egyptians "probably originated amongst the priests and learned men of the east of Europe, who, startled by the sudden apparition of bands of people foreign in appearance and language, skilled in divination and the occult arts, endeavoured to find in Scripture a clue to such a phenomenon; the result of which was that the Romas (Gipsies) of Hindostan were suddenly transformed into Egyptian penitents, a title which they have ever since borne in various parts of Europe." Why should the priests and learned men of the east of Europe go to the Bible to find the origin of such a people as the Gipsies? What did priests and learned men know of the Bible at the beginning of the fifteenth century? Did every priest, at that time, know there even was such a book as the Bible in existence? The priests and learned men of the east of Europe were more likely to turn to the eastern nations for the origin of the Gipsies, than to Egypt, were the mere matter of the skill of the Gipsies in divination and the occult arts to lead them to make any enquiry into their history. But what could have induced the priests and learned men to take any such particular interest in the Gipsies? When the Gipsies entered Europe, they would feel under the necessity of saying who they were. Having committed themselves to that point, how could they afterwards call themselves by that name which Mr. Borrow supposes the priests and learned men to have given them? Or, I should rather say,

how could the priests and learned men think of giving them a name after they themselves had said who they were? And did the priests and learned men invent the idea of the Gipsies being pilgrims, or bestow upon their leaders the titles of dukes, earls, lords, counts and knights of Little Egypt? Assuredly not; all these matters must have originated with the Gipsies themselves. The truth is, Mr. Borrow has evidently had no opportunities of learning, or, at least, has not duly appreciated, the real mental acquirements of the early Gipsies, an idea of which will be found in the history of the race on their first general arrival in Scotland, about a hundred years after they were first taken notice of in Europe, during which time they are not supposed to have made any great progress in mental condition. I may venture to say that the prophecy of Ezekiel,* in regard to the scattering of the Egyptians, does not apply to the Gipsies, for this reason, that such of these Egyptians as were *carried away captive* would become lost among other nations, while the "mixed multitude" which left Egypt with the Jews, travelled East, *their own masters*, and became the origin of the Gipsy nation throughout the world. If we could but find traces of an Egyptian origin among the Gipsies of Asia, say Central and Western Asia, the question would be beyond dispute. But that might be a matter of some trouble. I am inclined to believe that the people in India corresponding to the Gipsies in Europe, will be found among those tented tribes who perform certain services to the British armies; at all events there is such a tribe in India, who are called Gipsies by the Europeans who come in contact with them. A short time ago, one of these people, who followed the occupation of a camel driver in India, found his way to England,

* Ezek. xxix. 12,-14, and xxx. 10, 23, and 26.—The scattering of the Egyptians, here foretold, is a subject about which very little is known. Scott, in commenting on it, says: "History informs us that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt, and carrying multitudes of prisoners hence, dispersed them in different parts of his dominions: and doubtless great numbers perished, or took shelter in other nations at the same time. But we are not sufficiently informed of the transactions of those ages, to show the exact fulfilment of this part of the prophecy, as has been done in other instances."

The bulk of the Egyptians were doubtless restored to their country, as promised in Ezek. xxix. 13, 14, and it is not impossible that the Gipsies are the descendants of such as did not return to Egypt. The language which they now speak proves nothing to the contrary, as, since the time in question, they have had opportunities to learn and unlearn many languages.

and "pulled up" with some English Gipsies, whom he recognized as his own people; at least he found that they had the ways and ceremonies of them. But it would be unreasonable to suppose that such a tribe in India did not follow various occupations. Bishop Heber, on several occasions, speaks of certain tents of people whom he met in India, as Gipsies. But I can conceive nothing more difficult than an attempt to elucidate the history of any of the infinity of sects, castes, or tribes to be met with in India.* What evidently leads Mr. Borrow and others astray, in the matter of the origin of the Gipsies, is, that they conclude that, because the language spoken by the Gipsies is apparently, or for the most part, Hindostanee, therefore the people speaking it originated in Hindostan; as just a conclusion as it would be to maintain that the Negroes in Liberia originated in England because they speak the English language!

The leaders of the Gipsies, on the arrival of the body in Europe, and for a long time afterwards, seem to have been a superior class to those known as Gipsies to-day; although, if the more intelligent of the race were observable to the general eye, they would, in many respects, compare most

* Abbé Dubois says: "In every country of the Peninsula, great numbers of foreign families are to be found, whose ancestors had been obliged to emigrate thither, in times of trouble or famine, from their native land, and to establish themselves amongst strangers. This species of emigration is very common in all the countries of India; but what is most remarkable is, *that in a foreign land, these emigrants preserve, from generation to generation, their own language and national peculiarities.* Many instances might be pointed out of such foreign families, settled four or five hundred years in the district they now inhabit, without approximating in the least to the manners, fashions, or even to the language, of the nation where they have been for so many generations naturalized. They still preserve the remembrance of their origin, and keep up the ceremonies and usages of the land where their ancestors were born, without ever receiving any tincture of the particular habits of the countries where they live."—Preface xvii.

At page 470, he gives an instance of a wandering tribe in the Mysore and Telinga country, originally employed in agriculture, who, a hundred and fifty years previously, took up their vagrant and wandering life, in consequence of the severe treatment which the governor of the province was going to inflict upon some of their favourite chiefs. To this kind of life they have grown so much accustomed, that it would be impossible to reclaim them to any fixed or sedentary habits; and they have never entertained a thought of resuming their ancient manners. They sojourn in the open fields, under small tents of bamboo, and wander from place to place as humour dictates. They amount to seven or eight thousand individuals, are divided into tribes, and are under the government of chiefs, and maintain a great respect for the property of others.

favourably with many of our middle classes. If the leaders of the Gipsies, at that time, fell behind some of even the nobility, in the pittance of the education of letters which the latter possessed, they made up for it in that practical sagacity the acquisition of which is almost unavoidable in the school in which, from infancy, they had been educated—that of providing for the shifts and exigencies of which their lives, as a whole, consisted ; besides showing that superior aptitude for many of the things of every-day life, so inseparable from the success to which a special pursuit will lead. A Gipsy leader stood, then, somewhat in the position towards a gentleman that a swell does to-day ; with this difference, that he was not apt to commit himself by the display of that ignorance which unmasks the swell ; an ignorance which the gentleman, in spite of his little learning, no less shared in. If the latter happened to be well educated, the Gipsy could still pass muster, from being as well, or rather as ill, informed as many with whom the gentleman associated. The Gipsy being alert, capable of playing many characters, often a good musician, an excellent player at games of hazard, famous at tale and repartee, clever at sleight of hand tricks, ready with his weapon, at least in the boast of it, apt at field and athletic sports, suspicious of everything and everybody around him, the whole energies of his mind given to, and his life spent in, circumventing and plundering those around him, while, in appearance, “living in peaceable and catholic manner,” and “doing a lawful business,” and having that thorough knowledge of men acquired by mixing with all classes, in every part of the country—he became even more than a match for the other, whose life was spent in occasional forays, field sports and revellings, with so little to engage his intellectual nature, from his limited education, the non-existence of books, and the forms of government and social institutions, with those beautifully complicated bearings and interests towards general society which the present age displays. At such a time, conversation must have been confined to the ordinary affairs of common life, the journal of much of which, beyond one’s own immediate neighbourhood, would be found in the conversation of the accomplished Gipsy, who had the tact of ingratiating himself, in a manner peculiar to himself, with all kinds of society, even sometimes the very best. And it is remarkable that, when the Gipsies were persecuted, it was

seldom, if ever, at the instance of private individuals, but almost always by those acting under authority. If they were persecuted by a private individual, they would naturally leave for another district, and place themselves, for a time, in the nominal position of a clansman to such barons as would be always ready to receive them. The people at large generally courted their friendship, for the amusement which they afforded them, and the various services which they rendered them, the most important of which was the safety of property which followed from such an acquaintance. That being the case even with people of influence, it may be judged what position the Gipsies occupied towards the various classes downwards; the lowest of which they have always despised, and delighted to tyrannize over. In coming among them, the Gipsies, from the first, exhibited ways of life and habits so dissimilar to those of the natives, and such tricks of legerdemain so peculiar to Eastern nations, and such claims of seeing into the future, as to cause many to believe them in league with the evil one; a conclusion very easily arrived at, in the darkness in which all were wrapped. Although the rabble of the Gipsies is said to have presented, in point of accoutrements, a most lamentable appearance, that could much more have been said of the same class of the natives, then, and long after, if we judge of a Highland "tail," of a little more than a century ago, as described by the author of *Waverley*; or even of the most unwashed of what has been termed the "unwashed multitude" of to-day. In point of adaptability to their respective modes of life, the poorest of the Gipsies far excelled the others. To carry out the character of pilgrims, the bulk of the Gipsies would go very poorly dressed; it would only be the chiefs who would be well accoutred.

But the Gipsies that appear to the general eye have fallen much from what they were. The superior class of Scottish Gipsies, possessing the talents and policy necessary to accommodate themselves to the change of circumstances around them, have adopted the modes of ordinary life to such an extent, and so far given up their wandering habits, as to baffle any chance of discovery by any one unacquainted with their history, and who will not, like a bloodhound, follow them into the retreats in which they and their descendants are now to be found. Such Gipsies are still a restless race,

and nourish that inveterate attachment to their blood and language which is peculiar to all of them. When we consider the change that has come over the face of society during the last hundred years, or even during a much shorter time, we will find many causes that have contributed to that which has come over the Gipsy character in its more atrocious aspect. All classes of our own people, from the highest to the lowest, have experienced the change; and nowhere to a greater extent than in the Highlands, where, in little more than a hundred years, a greater reformation has been effected, than took almost any other part of the world perhaps three centuries to accomplish; and where the people, as a body, have emerged, from a state of sanguinary barbarism, into the most lawful and the most moral and religious subjects of the British Empire. The Gipsies have likewise felt the change. Even the wildest of them have had the more outrageous features of their character subdued; but it is sometimes as an animal of prey, sans teeth, sans claws, sans everything. Officials, in the zeal of their callings, often greatly distress those that go about—compelling them, in their wanderings, to “move on;” and look after them so closely, that when they become obnoxious to the inhabitants, the offence has hardly occurred, ere, to use an expression, they are snapped up before they have had time to squeak. Amid such a state of things, it is difficult for Gipsies to flourish in their glory; still, such of them as go about in the olden form are deemed very annoying.

The dread which has always been entertained toward the Gipsies has been carefully fostered by them, and has become the principal means contributing to their toleration. They have always been combined in a brotherhood of sentiment and interest, even when deadly feuds existed among them; an injury toward one being generally taken up by others; and have presented that union of sympathy, and lawless violence toward the community, which show what a few audacious and desperate men, under such circumstances, will sometimes do in a well regulated society. Sir Walter Scott, relative to the original of one of his heroines, says: “She was wont to say that she could bring, from the remotest parts of the island friends, to revenge her quarrel, while she sat motionless in her cottage; and frequently boasted that there was a time when she was of still more considerable

importance, when there were at her wedding fifty saddled asses, and unsaddled asses without number." But of their various crimes, none have had such terrors for the grown-up person as those of fire-raising and child-stealing. The Gipsy could easily steal into a well guarded but scattered premises, by night, and, in an instant, spread devastation around him, and irretrievable ruin to the rural inhabitant. But that which has, perhaps, contributed most to the feeling in question, has been their habit of child-stealing, the terrors of which have grown up with the people from infancy. This trait in the Gipsy character has certainly not been so common, in latter times, as some others; still, it has taken place. As an instance, it may be mentioned that Adam Smith, the author of the great work called "An Enquiry into the Causes of the Wealth of Nations," was actually carried off by the Gipsies, when a child, and was some hours in their possession before recovery. It is curious to think what might have been the political state of so many nations, and of Great Britain in particular, at the present time, if the father of political economy and free-trade, as he is generally called, had had to pass his life in a Gipsy encampment, and, like a white transferred to an Indian wigwam, under similar circumstances, acquired all their habits, and become more incorrigibly attached to them than the people themselves; tinkering kettles, pots, pans and old metal, in place of separating the ore of a beautiful science from the débris which had been for generations accumulating around it, and working it up into one of the noblest monuments of modern times.

When a child will become unruly, the father will often say, in the most serious manner, "Mother, that canna be our bairn—the Tinklers must have taken ours, and left theirs—are you sure that this is ours? Gie him back to the Gipsies again, and get our ain." The other children will look as bewildered, while the subject of remark will instantly stop crying, and look around for sympathy; but meeting nothing but suspicion in the faces of all, will instinctively flee to its mother, who as instinctively clasps it to her bosom, quieting its terrors, as a mother only can, with the lullaby,

"Hush nae, hush nae, dinna fret ye;
The black Tinkler winna get ye."*

* The Gipsies frighten their children in the same manner, by saying that they will give them to the *Gorgio*.

And the result is, that it will remain a "good bairn" for a long time after. This feeling, drawn into the juvenile mind, as food enters into the growth of the body, acts like the influence of the stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, often so inconsiderately told to children, but differs from it in this respect, that what causes it is true, while its effects are always more or less permanent. It has had this effect upon our youth—in connection with the other habits of the people, so outlandish when compared with the ways of our own—that should they happen to go a little distance from home, on such expeditions as boys are given to, and fall in with a Gipsy camp, a strange sensation of fear takes possession of them. The camp is generally found to be pitched in some little dell or nook, and so hidden from view as not to be noticed till the stranger is almost precipitated into its midst ere he is aware of it. What with the traditionary feeling toward the Gipsies, and the motley assemblage of wild looking men, and perhaps still wilder looking women, ragged little urchins, ferocious looking dogs, prepared for an assault with an instinct drawn from the character of their masters, and the droll appearance of so many *cuddies* (asses,) startled in their browsing—animals that generally appear singly, but, when driven by Gipsies, come in battalions ;—the boys, at first rivetted to the spot with terror, will slip away as quietly as possible till a little way off, and then run till they have either arrived at home, or come within the reach of a neighbourhood or people likely to protect them, although, it might be, the Gipsies had not even noticed them.* Curiosity is so strong in our youth, in such cases, as often to induce them to return to the spot, after being satisfied that the Gipsies have decamped for another district. They will then examine the débris of the encampment with a great degree of minuteness, wreaking their vengeance on what is left, by turning up with their feet the refuse of almost everything edible, particularly as regards the bones and feathers of fowl and game, and, if it happened to be near the sea, crab, limpet, and whelk shells, and heaps of tin clippings and horn scrapings. In after life, they will often think of and visit the scenes of such adventures. At other times, our youth, when rambling, will often make a

* As children, have we not, at some time, run affrighted from a Gipsy ?
—Grellmann on the Hungarian Gipsies.

detour of several miles, to avoid falling in with the dreaded Gipsies. The report of Gipsies being about acts as a salutary check upon the depredatory habits of the youth of our country towns on neighbouring crops ; for, as the farmers make up their minds to lose something by the Gipsies, at any rate, the wholesome dread they inspire, even in grown-up lads, is such as, by night especially, to scare away the thieves from those villages, whose plunderings are much greater, and more unwillingly submitted to, from the closeness of residence of the offenders ; so that the arrival of the Gipsies, in some places, is welcomed, at certain times of the year, as the lesser of two evils ; and, to that extent, they have been termed the "farmers' friends." And if a little encouragement is given them—such as the matter of "dogs' payment," that is, what they can eat and drink, and a mouthful of something for the *cuddy*, for the first day after their arrival—the farmer can always enlist an admirable police, who will guard his property against others, with a degree of faithfulness that can hardly be surpassed. I heard of a Scottish farmer, very lately, getting the Gipsies to take up their quarters every year on the corner of a potato or turnip field, with the express purpose of using them, as half constables half scare-crows, against the common rogues of the neighbourhood. "Now," said he to the principal Gipsy, "I put you in charge of this property. If you want anything for yourselves, come to the barn." Whatever might have been the experience of farmers near by, this farmer never missed anything while the Gipsies were on his premises.

But a greater degree of awe is inspired by the females than the males of the Gipsies. In their periodical wanderings, they will generally, with their fortune-telling, turn the heads of the country girls in matters of matrimony—setting them all agog on husbands ; and render them, for the time, of but little use to their employers. In teaching them the "art of love," they will professedly so instruct them as to have as many lovers at once as their hearts can desire. But if a country girl, with her many admirers, has one to get quit of, who is "no' very weel faured, but a clever fellow," or another, who is "no' very bright in the upper story, but strapping enough to become the dish-clout," she will call in the assistance of the strolling Gipsy ; who, after carefully weighing the circumstances of the case, will sometimes, after

ordinary means have failed, collect, unknown to her, a bucket full of everything odious about a dwelling, wait at the back door the return of the rustic Adonis, and, ere he is aware, dash it full in his face ; then fold her arms akimbo, and quietly remark, "That will cool your ears, and your courting too, my man!" Such Gipsy women are peculiarly dreaded by the males of our own people, who will much sooner encounter those of the other sex ; for, however much some of them may be satisfied, in their cooler moments, that these Gipsy women will not attempt what they will sometimes threaten, they generally deem them "unco uncanny," at any time, and will flee when swearing that they will *gut* or *skin alive* all who may have anything to say to them.

To people unacquainted with the peculiarities of the Gipsies, it may appear that this picture is overdrawn. But Sir Walter Scott, who is universally allowed to be a true depicter of Scottish life, in every form, says, in reference to the original of Meg Merrilies, in *Guy Mannering* : "I remember to have seen one of her grand-daughters ; that is, as Dr. Johnson had a shadowy recollection of Queen Anne—a stately lady in black, adorned with diamonds ; so my memory is haunted by a solemn remembrance of a woman, of more than female height, dressed in a long, red cloak, who commenced acquaintance by giving me an apple, but whom, nevertheless, I looked on with as much awe as the future Doctor could look upon the Queen." And he approvingly quotes another writer, as to her daughter, as follows : "Every week, she paid my father a visit for her *awmons*, when I was a little boy, and I looked on her with no common degree of awe and terror." The same feeling, somewhat modified, I have heard expressed by Germans, Spaniards, and Italians. In England, the people do not like to trouble the Gipsies, owing to their being so "spiteful," as they express it. The feeling in question cannot well be realized by people reared in towns, who have, perhaps, never seen Gipsies, or heard much about them ; but it is different with youths brought up in the country. When the Gipsies, in their peregrinations, will make their appearance at a farmer's house, especially if it is in the pastoral districts, and the farmer be a man of information and reflection, he will often treat them kindly, from the interest with which their singular history inspires him ; and others, not unkindly, from other motives. The farmer's sons,

who are young and hasty, probably but recently returned from a town, where they have been jeered at for their cowardice in being afraid to meddle with the Gipsies, will show a disposition to use them roughly, on the cry arising in the house, that "the Tinklers are coming." But the old father, cautious with the teachings of years gone by, will become alarmed at such symptoms, and, before the Gipsies have approached the premises, will urge his children to treat them kindly. "Be canny now, bairns—be canny; for any sake dinna anger them; gie them a' they want, and something more." With this, a good fat sheep will sometimes be killed, and the band regaled with *kail*, and its accompaniments; or, if they are very *nice gabbit*, it will be served up to them in a roasted form. Thereafter, they will retire to the barn, and start in the morning on something better than an empty stomach.

And yet it is singular that, if the Gipsies are met in the streets of a town, or any considerably frequented place, people will, in passing them, edge off a little to the side, and look at them with a degree of interest, which, on ordinary occasions, the Gipsies will but little notice. But if a person of respectable appearance will scrutinize them in an ominous way, they will observe it instantly; and, as a swell-mobsman, on being stared at by a detective, on the mere suspicion of his being such, generally turns the first cross street, and, in turning, anxiously looks after his enemy, who, after calculating the distance, has also turned to watch his movements, so the Gipsy will become excited, soon turning round to watch the movements of the object of his dread; a fear that will be heightened if any of his band has been spoken to. And such is the masonic secrecy with which they keep their language, that should they at the time have rested on the road-side, and the stranger assume the most impressive tone, and say: "*Sallah, jaw drom*"—(curse you, take the road), the effects upon them are at first bewildering, and followed by a feeling of some dire calamity that is about to befall them. When any of the poorest kind can be prevailed upon to express a candid sentiment, and be asked how they really do get on, they will reply, "It's only day and way we want, ye ken—what a farmer body ne'er can miss; foreby selling a spoon, and tinkering a kettle now and then."

In viewing the effects of civilization upon a barbarous

race, we are naturally led to confine our reflections to some of the instances in which the civilized race has carried its influence abroad to those beyond its pale, to the exclusion of those instances, from their infrequency of occurrence, in which the barbarous race, of its own accord or otherwise, has come within its circle. There are but two instances, in modern times, in which the latter has happened, and they are well worthy of our notice. The one is, the existence of the Gipsies, in the very heart of civilization; the other, that of the Africans in the various European settlements in the New World; and between these a short comparison may be instituted, although at the risk of it being deemed a digression.

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The forcible introduction of barbarous men into the colonies of civilized nations, in spite of the cruelties which many of them have undergone, has greatly improved their condition—their moral and intellectual nature—at the expense of the melancholy fact of it being advanced as a reason of justification for that sad anomaly in the history of our times. The African, it is admitted, was forcibly brought under the influence of the refinement, religion, and morals of the whites, whether as a domestic under the same roof, a field labourer, in the immediate vicinity of the master, or in some other way under his direct control and example. Not only was he, as it were, forced to become what he is, but his obedient, light-hearted, and imitative nature, even under many bodily sufferings, instinctively led him to enter immediately into the spirit of a new life, presenting to his barbarous imagination, so destitute of everything above the grossest of animal wants and propensities, those wonderfully incessant and complicated employments of a being, appearing to him as almost a god, when compared with his own savage and unsophisticated nature. The importations comprised Negroes of many dialects, which were distributed on arrival in every direction. A large proportion would live singly with the poorer classes of the colonists, as domestics; two or three would be the limited number with many others, and the remainder would be disposed of, in larger or smaller numbers, for the various services necessary in civilized life. Single domestics would be under the necessity of learning the language of the master; and, having none speaking their own dialect to commune with, or only occasionally meeting

such, momentarily, they would soon forget it. When several of different dialects lived together, they would naturally follow the same course, to communicate with each other. All these circumstances, with the frequent changes of masters and companions, and the general influence which the whites exercised so supremely over them, have had the effect of almost erasing every trace of the language, customs, and superstitions of Africa, in parts of the United States of America, in little more than one generation. The same may especially be said of what pertains to the religious; for a race of men, in a state of nature, or but slightly civilized, depending for such instruction on the adjunct of a superior grade, in the person of a priest, would, on being deprived of such, soon lose recollection of what had been taught them. Such an instance as to language, and, I understand, to a great extent as to religion, is to be found in St. Domingo; French and Spanish being spoken in the parts of that island which belonged to these countries respectively. Still, such traces are to be found in Cuba; but, were importations of Africans into that island to cease, the same result would, in course of time, follow. From such causes as those stated, the Negroes in the United States have, to a very great extent, nay, as far as their advantages and opportunities have gone, altogether, acquired the ways of civilized life, and adopted the morals and religion of the white race; and their history compares favourably with that of a portion of the Gipsy race, which, being unique, and apparently incomprehensible, I will institute a short enquiry into some of the causes of it.

While the language and common origin of the Gipsies hold them together as a body, their mode of life has taken such a hold on the innate nature of the representative part of them, as to render it difficult to wean them from it. Like the North American Indians, they have been incapable of being reduced to a state of servitude;* and, in their own peculiar way, have been as much attached to a life of unrestricted freedom of movement. Being an Oriental people, they have displayed the uniformity of attachment to habit, that has characterized the people of that part of the world. Like the maidens of Syria, wearing to-day the identical kind of veil with which Rebecca covered herself when she met

* There is an exception, however, to this rule in the Danubian Principalities, to which I will again refer.

Isaac, they have, with few exceptions, adhered to all that originally distinguished them from those among whom they are found. In entering Europe, they would meet with few customs which they would willingly adopt in preference to their own. Their chiefs, being men of ambition, and fond of a distinguished position in the tribe, would influence the body to remain aloof from the people at large ; and society being divided between the nobles and their various grades of dependents, and the restrained inhabitants of towns, with what part of the population could the Gipsies have been incorporated ? With the lowest classes only, and become little better than serfs—a state to which it was almost impossible for a Gipsy to submit. His habits rendered him unfit to till the soil ; the close and arbitrary laws of municipalities would debar him from exercising almost any mechanical trade, in a way suitable to his disposition ; and, no matter what might have been his natural propensities, he had almost no alternative left him but to wander, peddle, tinker, tell fortunes, and “find things that nobody ever lost.” His natural disposition was to rove, and partake of whatever he took a liking to ; nothing coming so acceptably and so sweetly to him, as when it required an exercise of ingenuity, and sometimes a degree of danger, in its acquisition, and caused a corresponding chagrin to him from whom it was taken, without affording him any trace of the purloiner. He must also enjoy the sports of the river and lake, the field, hill and forest, and the pleasure of his meal, cooked after his own fashion, in some quiet spot, where he would pitch his tent, and quench his thirst at his favourite springs. Then followed the persecution of his race ; both by law and society it was declared outcast, although, by a large part of the latter, it was, from selfish motives, tolerated, and, in a measure, courted. The Gipsy's mode of life ; his predatory habits ; his vindictive disposition toward his enemies ; his presumptuous bearing toward the lower classes, who had purchased his friendship and protection ; his astuteness in doubling upon and escaping his pursuers ; his audacity, under various disguises and pretences, in bearding justice, and the triumphant manner in which he would generally escape its toils ; his utter destitution of religious opinions, or sentiments ; his being a foreigner of such strongly marked appearance, under the legal and social ban of proscription ;

and the hereditary name which has, in consequence, attached to his race, have created those broad and deep-drawn lines of isolation, fear and antipathy, which, in the popular mind, have separated him from other men. To escape from the dreadful prejudice that is, in consequence, entertained toward his race, the Gipsy will, if it be possible, hide the fact of his being a Gipsy ; and more especially when he enters upon settled life, and mixes with his fellow-men in the world.

In the general history of Europe, we can find nothing to illustrate that of the Gipsies. But if we take a glance at the history of the New World, we will find, in a mild and harmless form, something that bears a slight resemblance to it. In various parts of the eastern division of North America are to be found remnants of tribes of Indians, living in the hearts of the settlements, on reserves of lands granted to them for their support ; a race bearing somewhat the same resemblance to the European settlers that the Gipsies, with their dark complexion, and long, coarse, black hair, seem to have borne to the natives of Europe. Few of these Indians, although in a manner civilized, and professing the Christian religion, and possessing houses, schools and churches, have betaken, or, if they support their numbers, will ever betake, themselves to the ways of the other inhabitants. They will engage in many things to make a living, and a bare living ; in that respect very much resembling some of the Gipsies. They will often leave their home, and build their wigwams whenever and wherever they have a mind, and indulge in the pleasures of hunting and laziness ; and often make numerous small wares for sale, with the proceeds of which, and of the timber growing on their lots of land, they will manage to pass their lives in little better than sloth, often accompanied by drunkenness. If it prove otherwise, it is generally from the Indian, or rather half or quarter breed, having been wholly or partly reared with whites, or otherwise brought up under their immediate influence ; or from the ambition of their chiefs to raise themselves in the estimation of the white race, leading, from the influence which they possess, to some of the lower grades of the tribes following their example. It may be that the "poor Indian" has voluntarily exiled himself, in a fit of melancholy, from the wreck of his patrimony, to make a miserable shift for himself elsewhere, as he best may. In

this respect the resemblance fails : that the Indian in America is aboriginal, the Gipsy in Europe foreign, to the soil ; but both are characterized by a nature that renders them almost impervious to voluntary change. In this they resemble each other : that they are left to live by themselves, and transmit to their descendants their respective languages, and such of their habits as the change in their outward circumstances will permit. But in this they differ : that these Indians really do die out, while the Gipsies are very prolific, and become invigorated by a mixture of the white blood ; under the cover of which they gradually leave the tent, and become scattered over and through society, enter into the various pursuits common to the ordinary natives, and become lost to the observation of the rest of the population.

The peculiar feeling that is entertained for what is popularly understood to be a Gipsy, differs from that which is displayed toward the Negro, in that it attaches to his traditional character and mode of life alone. The general prejudice against the Negro is, to a certain extent, natural, and what any one can realize. If the European has a difficulty in appreciating the feeling which is exhibited by Americans against the African, in their general intercourse of daily life, few Americans can realize the feeling which is entertained toward the tented Gipsy. Should such a Gipsy be permitted to enter the dwelling of a native, the most he will let him come in contact with will be the chair he will give him to sit on, and the dish and spoon out of which he will feed him, all of which can again be cleaned. His guest will never weary his patience, owing to the embodiment of restlessness which characterizes his race ; nor will his feelings ever be tried by his asking him for a bed, for what the herb commonly called catnip is to the animal somewhat corresponding to that word, a bundle of straw in an out-house is to the tented Gipsy.

INTRODUCTION.

THE new era which the series of splendid works, called the Waverly Novels, created in literature, produced, among other effects, that of directing attention to that singular anomaly in civilization—the existence of a race of men scattered over the world, and known, wherever the English language is spoken, as Gipsies ; a class as distinct, in some respects, from the people among whom they live, as the Jews at the present day. The first of the series in which their singular characters, habits, and modes of life were illustrated, was that of *Guy Mannering* ; proving one of the few happy instances in which a work of fiction has been found to serve the end of specially stirring up the feelings of the human mind, in its various phases, toward a subject with which it has a common sympathy. The peasant and the farmer at once felt attracted by it, from the dread of personal danger which they had always entertained for the race, and the uncertainty under which they had lived, for the safety of their property from fire and robbery, and the desire which they had invariably shown to propitiate them by the payment of a species of blackmail, under the form of kind treatment, and a manner of hospitality when occasion called for it. The work at the same time struck a chord in the religious and humane sentiments of others, and the result, but a very tardily manifested one, was the springing up of associations for their reformation ; with comparatively little success, however, for it was found, as a general thing, that while some of the race allowed their children, very indifferently, even precariously, to attend school, yet to cure them of their naturally wandering and other peculiar dispositions, was nearly as hopeless as the converting of the American Indians to some of the ways of civilized life. That general class was also interested, which consist of the more or less

educated, moral, or refined, to whom anything exciting comes with relish. To the historical student, the subject was fraught with matter for curious investigation, owing to the race having been ignored, for a length of time, as being in no respect different from a class to be found in all countries; and, whatever their origin, as having had their nationality extinguished in that general process which has been found to level every distinction of race in our country. The antiquary and philologist, in their respective pursuits, found also a sphere which they were unlikely to leave unexplored, considering that they are often so untiring in their researches in such matters as sometimes to draw upon themselves a smile from the rest of mankind: and while the latter was thinking that he had exhausted the languages of his native land, and was contemplating others elsewhere, he struck accidentally upon a mine under his feet, and at once turned up a specimen of virgin ore; coming all the more acceptably to him, from those in possession of it keeping it as secret as if their existence depended on its being concealed from others around them. All, indeed, but especially those brought up in rural places, knew from childhood more or less of the Gipsies, and dreaded them by day or night, in frequented or in lonely places, knowing well that, if insulted, they would threaten vengeance, if they could not execute it then; which they in no way doubted, with the terror of doomed men.

Among others, I felt interested in the subject, from having been brought up in the pastoral district of Tweed-dale, the resort of many Gipsies, who were treated with great favour by the inhabitants, for many reasons, the most important of which were the desire of securing their good-will, for their own benefit, and the use which they were to them in selling them articles in request, and the various mechanical turns which they possessed; and often from the natural generosity of people so circumstanced. My curiosity was excited, and having various sources of information at command, I proceeded to write a few short articles for Blackwood's Magazine, which were well received, as the following letters from Mr. William Blackwood will show:

"I now send a proof of No. 2 Gipsy article. I hope you are pleased, and will return it with your corrections on Monday or Tuesday. We shall be glad to hear you are

going on with the continuation, for I assure you your former article has been as popular as anything almost we ever had in the magazine."

Again,

"Your magazine was sent this morning by the coach, but I had not time to write you last night. Mr. Walter Scott is quite delighted with the Gipsies."

Again,

"I am this moment favoured with your interesting packet. Your Gipsies, from the slight glance I have given them, seem to be as amusing as ever."

And again,

"It was not in my power to get your number sent off. It is a very interesting one. You will be much pleased with Mr. Scott's little article on Buckhaven, in which he pays you some very just compliments."*

At the same time I was much encouraged, by the author of *Guy Mannering*, to prosecute my enquiries, by receiving several communications from him, and conversing with him at Abbotsford, on the subject.

* The following is the article alluded to: "The following enquiries are addressed to the author of the Gipsies in Fife, being suggested by the research and industry which he has displayed in collecting memorials of that vagrant race. They relate to a class of persons who, distinguished for honest industry in a laborious and dangerous calling, have only this in common with the Egyptian tribes, that they are not originally native of the country which they inhabit, and are supposed still to exhibit traces of a foreign origin. . . . I mean the colony of fishermen in the village of Buckhaven, in Fife. . . .

"I make no apology to your respectable correspondent for engaging him in so troublesome a research. The local antiquary, of all others, ought, in the zeal of his calling, to feel the force of what Spencer wrote and Burke quoted: 'Love esteems no office mean.'—'Entire affection scorneth nicer hands.' The curious collector who seeks for ancient reliques among the ruins of ancient Rome, often pays for permission to trench or dig over some particular piece of ground, in hopes to discover some remnant of antiquity. Sometimes he gets only his labour, and the ridicule of having wasted it, to pay for his pains; sometimes he finds but old bricks and shattered pot-sherds; but sometimes also his toil is rewarded by a valuable medal, cameo, bronze, or statue. And upon the same principle it is, by investigating and comparing popular customs, often trivial and foolish in themselves, that we often arrive at the means of establishing curious and material facts in history."

This extract is given for the benefit of the latter part of it, which applies admirably to the present subject; yet falls as much short of it as the interest in the history of an Egyptian mummy falls short of that of a living and universally scattered race, that appears a riddle to our comprehension.

I received a letter from Sir Walter, in which he says :

"This letter has been by me many weeks, waiting for a frank, and besides, our mutual friend, Mr. Laidlaw, under whose charge my agricultural operations are now proceeding in great style, gave me some hope of seeing you in this part of the country. I should like much to have asked you some questions about the Gipsies, and particularly that great mystery—their language. I cannot determine, in my own mind, whether it is likely to prove really a corrupt eastern dialect, or whether it has degenerated into mere jargon."

About the same time I received the following letter from Mr. William Laidlaw, the particular friend of Sir Walter Scott, and manager of his estate at Abbotsford, as mentioned in the foregoing letter ; the author of "*Lucy's Flittin*," and a contributor to *Blackwood* :

"I was very seriously disappointed at not seeing you when you were in this (part of the) country, and so was no less a person than the mighty minstrel himself. He charged me to let him know whenever you arrived, for he was very anxious to see you. What would it be to you to take the coach, and three days before you, and again see your father and mother, come here on an evening, and call on Mr. Scott next day? We would then get you full information upon the science of defence in all its departments. Quarterstaff is now little practised ; but it was a sort of legerdemain way of fighting that I never had *muckle broo of*, although I know somewhat of the method. It was a most unfortunate and stupid trick of the man to blow you up with your kittle acquaintances. I hope they will forgive and forget. I am very much interested about the language (Gipsy). Mr. Scott has repeatedly said, that whatever you hear or see, you should *never let on to naebody*, no doubt excepting himself. Be sure and come well provided with specimens of the vocables, as he says he might perhaps have it in his power to assist you in your enquiries."

Shortly after this, Sir Walter wrote me as follows :

"The inclosed letter has long been written. I only now send it to show that I have not been ungrateful, though late in expressing my thanks. The progress you have been able to make in the Gipsy language is most extremely interesting. My acquaintance with most European languages, and with slang words and expressions, enables me to say positively,

that the Gipsy words you have collected have no reference to either, with the exception of three or four.* I have little doubt, from the sound and appearance, that they are Oriental, probably Hindostanee. When I go to Edinburgh, I shall endeavour to find a copy of Grellmann, to compare the language of the German Gipsies with that of the Scottish tribes. As you have already done so much, I pray you to proceed in your enquiries, but by no means to make anything public, as it might spread a premature alarm, and obstruct your future enquiries. It would be important to get the same words from different individuals; and in order to verify the collection, I would recommend you to set down the names of the persons by whom they were communicated. It would be important to know whether they have a real language, with the usual parts of speech, or whether they have a collection of nouns, combined by our own language. I suspect the former to be the case, from the specimens I have had. I should like much to see the article you proposed for the magazine. I am not squeamish about delicacies, where knowledge is to be sifted out and acquired. I like Ebony's† idea of a history of the Gipsies very much, and I wish you would undertake it. I gave all my scraps to the magazine at its commencement, but I think myself entitled to say that you are welcome to the use of them, should you choose to incorporate them into such a work. Do not be in too great a hurry, but get as many materials as you can."‡

And again as follows :

"An authentic list of Gipsy words, as used in Scotland, especially if in such numbers as may afford any reasonable

* I sent him a specimen of forty-six words. [Many words used in Scotland, in every-day life, are evidently derived from the Gipsy, owing, doubtless, to the singularity of the people who have used them, or the happy peculiarity of circumstances under which they have been uttered; the original cause of such passing current in a language, no less than that degree of personal authority which sometimes occasions them to be adopted. *Randy*, a disreputable word for a bold, scolding, and not over nicely worded woman, is evidently derived from the Gipsy *raunie*, the chief of a tribe of viragos; so that the exceptions spoken of are as likely to have been derived from the Gipsy as *vice versa*.—Ed.]

† The name by which Mr. Blackwood was known in the celebrated Chaldee manuscript, published in his magazine.

‡ Previous to this, Mr. Blackwood wrote me as follows: "I received your packet some days ago, and immediately gave it to the editor. He

or probable conjecture as to the structure of the language, is a desideratum in Scottish literature which would be very acceptable to the philologist, as well as an addition to general history. I am not aware that any such exists, though there is a German publication on the subject, which it would be very necessary to consult.* That the language exists, I have no doubt, though I should rather think the number to which it is known is somewhat exaggerated. I need not point out to you the difference between the *cant* language, or *slang*, used by thieves or flash men in general, and the peculiar dialect said to be spoken by the Gipsies.† The difference ought to be very carefully noticed, to ascertain what sort of language they exactly talk; whether it is an original tongue, having its own mode of construction, or a speech made up of cant expressions, having an English or Scotch ground-work, and only patched up so as to be unintelligible to the common hearer. There is nothing else occurs to me by which I can be of service to your enquiry. My own opinion leads me to think that the Gipsies have a distinct and proper language, but I do not consider it is extensive enough to form any settled conclusion. If there occur any facts which I can be supposed to know, on which you desire information, I will be willing to give them, in illustration of so curious an enquiry. I have found them, in general, civil and amenable to reason; I must, nevertheless, add that they are vindictive, and that, as the knowledge of their language is the secret which their habits and ignorance make them tenacious of, I think your researches, unless conducted with great prudence, may possibly expose you to personal danger. For the same reason, you ought to complete all the information you can collect, before alarming them by a premature publication, as, after you

desires me to say that your No. 5, though very curious, would not answer, from the nature of the details, to be printed in the magazine. In a regular history of the Gipsies, they would, of course, find a place." This was what suggested the idea of the present work.

* Grellmann. I am not aware that he ever compared the words I sent him with those in this publication, as he wrote he would do, in the previous letter quoted.

† Throughout the whole of his works there does not appear, I believe, a single word of the proper Scottish Gipsy; although slang and cant expressions are to be found in considerable numbers. [Some of these are of Gipsy extraction.—Ed.]

have published, there will be great obstructions to future communications on the subject."

From what has been said, it will be seen that the following investigation has had quite a different object than a description of the manners and habits of the common vagrants of the country; for no possible entertainment could have been derived from such an undignified undertaking. And yet many of our youth, although otherwise well informed, have never made this distinction; owing, no doubt, to the increased attention which those in power have, in late years, bestowed on the internal affairs of the country, and the unseen, but no less surely felt, pressure of the advancement of the general mass, and especially of the lower classes of the community, forcing many of these people into positions beyond the observation of those unacquainted with their language and traits of character. When it is, therefore, considered, that the body treated of, is originally an exotic, comprising, I am satisfied, no less than five thousand souls in Scotland,* speaking an original and peculiar language, which is mysteriously used among themselves with great secrecy, and differing so widely from the ordinary natives of the soil, it may well claim some little portion of public attention. A further importance attaches to the subject, when it is considered that a proportionate number is to be found in the other divisions of the British Isles, and large hordes in all parts of Europe, and more or less in every other part of the world; in all places speaking the same language, with only a slight difference in dialect, and manifesting the same peculiarities. In using the language of Dr. Bright, it may be said, that the circumstance is the most singular phenomenon in the history of man; much more striking, indeed, than that of the Jews. For the Jews have been favoured with the most splendid antecedents; a common parentage; a common history; a special and exclusive revelation; a deeply rooted religious prejudice, and antipathy; a common persecution; and whatever might appear necessary to preserve their identity in the world, excepting an isolated territorial and political existence.† The Gipsies,

* There cannot be less than 100,000 Gipsies in Scotland. See *Disquisition on the Gipsies*.—Ed.

† The following is a description of the Jews, throughout the world, as given by them, in their letters to Voltaire: "A Jew in London bears as

on the other hand, have had none of these advantages. But it is certain that the leaders of their bands, in addition to their piteous representations, must have had something striking about them, to recommend them to the favourable notice which they seem to have met with, at the hands of some of the sovereigns of Europe, when they made their appearance there, and spread over its surface. Still, their assumptions might, and in all probability did, rest merely upon an amount of general superiority of character, of a particular kind, without even the first elements of education, which in that age would amount to something ; a leading feature of character which their chiefs have ever since maintained ; and yet, although everything has been left by them to tradition, the Gipsies speak their language much better than the Jews.

Gipsies and Jews have many things in common. They are both strangers and sojourners, in a sense, wherever they are to be found ; "dwelling in tents," the one literally, the other figuratively. They have each undergone many bloody persecutions ; the one for his stubborn blindness to the advent of the Messiah, the other for being a heathen, and worse than a heathen—for being nothing at all, but linked with the evil one, in all manner of witchcraft and sin. Each race has had many crimes brought against it ; the Gipsy, those of a positive, and the Jew, those of a constructive and arbitrary nature. But in these respects they differ : the Jew has been known and famed for doing almost anything for money ; and the Gipsy for the mere gratification of his most innate nature—that of appropriating to himself, when he needs it, that which is claimed by any out of the circle of his consanguinity. The one's soul is given to accumulating, and, if it is in his power, he becomes rich ; the other more commonly aims at securing what meets his ordinary wants, and, perhaps, some little thing additional ;

little resemblance to a Jew at Constantinople, as this last resembles a Chinese Mandarin ! A Portuguese Jew, of Bordeaux, and a German Jew, of Metz, appear two beings of a different nature ! It is, therefore, impossible to speak of the manners of the Jews in general, without entering into a very long detail, and into particular distinctions. The Jew is a chameleon, that assumes all the colours of the different climates he inhabits, of the different people he frequents, and of the different governments under which he lives."

These words are much more applicable to the Gipsy tribe, in consequence of their drawing into their body the blood of other people.—ED.

or, if he prove otherwise, he liberally spends what he acquires. The Gipsy is humane to a stranger, when he has been rightly appealed to; but when that circumstance is wanting, he will never hesitate to rob him, unless when he stands indebted to him, or, it may be, his immediate relations, for previous acts of kindness. To indulge his hatred towards an enemy, a Jew will oppress him, if he is his debtor, "exacting his bond;" or if he is not his debtor, he will often endeavour to get him to become such, with the same motive; or it may be, if his enemy stands in need of accommodation, he will not supply his wants; at other times, if he is poor, he will ostentatiously make a display of his wealth, to spite him; and, in carrying out his vengeance, will sometimes display the malignity, barring, perhaps, the shedding of blood, of almost every other race combined. In such a case, a Gipsy will rob, burn, maltreat, maim, carry off a child, and sometimes murder, but not often the two last at the present day.* The two races are to be found side by side, in countries characterized by almost every degree of climate and stage of civilization, each displaying its peculiar type of feature, but differing in this respect, that the Gipsies readily adopt others into their tribe, at such a tender age as to secure an infallible attachment to their race and habits. This circumstance has produced, in many instances, a change in the colour of the hair and eyes of the descendants of those adopted. In some such cases, it requires an intimate knowledge of the body, to detect the peculiarity common to all, and especially in those who have conformed to the ways of the other inhabitants. In this they agree—that they despise and hate, and are despised and hated by, those among whom they live. But in this they differ—that the Jew entered Europe, as it were, singly and by stealth, pursuing pretty much the avocations he yet follows; but the Gipsies, in bands, and openly, although they were forced to betake themselves to places of retreat, and break up into smaller bands. It is true that the Jew was driven from his home eighteen centuries ago, and that it is not yet five since the Gipsy appeared in Europe. We know who the Jew is, and something of the providence and circumstances under which he suffers, and what future awaits him; but who is this sin-

* This, I need hardly say, is a description of what may be called a *wild* Gipsy.—Ed.

gular and unfortunate exile, whose origin and cause of banishment none can comprehend—who is this wandering Gipsy?

After the receipt of the second of Sir Walter Scott's letters, already alluded to, I discontinued the few short articles I had written for Blackwood, on the Fifeshire Gipsies; but I have incorporated the most interesting part of them into the work, forming, however, only a small part of the whole. Since it was written, I have seen Mr. Borrow on the Gipsies in Spain, and the short report of the Rev. Mr. Baird, to the Scottish Church Society; the latter printed in 1840, and the former in 1841. The *Gitanos* in Spain and the *Tinklers* in Scotland are, in almost every particular, the same people, while the Yetholm Gipsy words in Mr. Baird's report and those collected by me, for the most part, between the years 1817 and 1831, are word for word the same.

In submitting this work to the public, I deem it necessary to say a word or two as to the authorities upon which the facts contained in it rest. My authorities for those under the heads of Fife and Linlithgowshire Gipsies, were aged and creditable persons, who had been eye-witnesses to the greater part of the transactions; in some cases, the particulars were quite current in their time. The details under the head of Gipsies who frequented Tweed-dale, Ettrick Forest, Annandale, and the upper ward of Lanarkshire, were chiefly derived from the memories of some of my relatives, and other individuals of credit, who had many opportunities of observing the manners of these wanderers, in the South of Scotland, the greater number being confirmed by the Gipsies, on being interrogated. The particulars under the head of the ceremonies of marriage and divorce, and the sacrifice of horses, were related by Gipsies, and confirmed by other undoubted testimony, as will appear in detail. Almost every recent occurrence and matter relative to the present condition, employment, and number of the body, is the result of my own personal enquiries and observations, while the whole specimens of the language, and the facts immediately connected therewith, were written down, with my own hand, from the mouths of the Gipsies themselves, and confirmed, at intervals, by others. Indeed, my chief object has been to produce facts from an original source, in Scotland, as far as respects manners, customs, and language, for the purpose of ascertaining the origin of this mysterious race, and the country from

which they have migrated ; and the result, to my mind, is a complete confirmation of Grellmann, Hoyland, and Bright, that they are from Hindostan.

In writing the history of any barbarous race, if history it can be called, the field for our observation must necessarily be very limited. This may especially be said of a people like the Gipsies ; for, having, as a people, neither literature, records, nor education,* all that can be drawn together of their history, from themselves, must be confined to that of the present, or of such time as the freshness of their tradition may suffice to illustrate ; unless it be a few precarious notices of them, that may have been elicited from their having come, it may be, in violent contact with their civilized neighbours around them. In attempting such a work, in connection with so singular a people, the difficulties in the way of succeeding in it are extraordinarily great, as the reader may have perceived, from what has already been written, and as the "blowing up," alluded to in Mr. Laidlaw's letter, will illustrate, and which was as follows :

I had obtained some of the Gipsy language from a principal family of the tribe, on condition of not publishing names, or place of residence ; and, at many miles' distance, I had also obtained some particulars relative to the customs and manners of the race, from a highly respectable farmer, in the south of Scotland. At his farm, the family alluded to always took up their quarters, in their periodical journeys through the country. The farmer, without ever thinking of the consequences, told them that I was collecting materials for a publication on the Tinklers, in Scotland, and that everything relative to their tribe would be given to the world. The aged chief of the family was thrown into the greatest distress, at the idea of the name and residence of himself and family being made public. I received a letter from the family, deeply lamenting that they had ever communicated a word to me relative to their language, and stating that the old man was like to break his heart, at his own imprudence, being in agony at the thought of his language being published to the world. I assured them, however, that they had no cause for fear, as I had never so much as mentioned their names to

* There are, comparatively speaking, few Gipsies in Scotland that have not some education, in common with the ordinary natives of the soil ; but the same cannot be said of England.—*Ed.*

their friend, the farmer, and that I would strictly adhere to the promise I had given them. This was one of the many instances in which I was obstructed in my labours, for, however cautious I might personally be, others, who became in some way or other acquainted with my object, were, from inconsiderate meddling, the cause of many difficulties being thrown in my way, and the consequent loss of much interesting information. But for this unfortunate circumstance, I am sanguine, from the method I took in managing the Gipsies, I would have been able to collect songs, and sentences of their language, and much more information than what has been procured, at whatever value the reader may estimate that; for the Gipsies are always more or less in communication with each other, in their various divisions of the country, especially when threatened with anything deemed dangerous, which they circulate among themselves with astonishing celerity.

Professor Wilson, in a poetical notice of Blackwood's Magazine, writes :

“ Few things more sweetly vary civil life
Than a barbarian, savage Tinkler tale;
Our friend, who on the Gipsies writes in Fife,
We verily believe promotes our sale.”

And, in revising his works, in 1831, Sir Walter Scott, in a note to Quentin Durward, says, relative to the present work :

“ It is natural to suppose, the band, (Gipsy), as it now exists, is much mingled with Europeans; but most of these have been brought up from childhood among them, and learned all their practices. . . . When they are in closest contact with the ordinary peasants around them, they still keep their language a mystery. There is little doubt, however, that it is a dialect of the Hindostanee, from the specimens produced by Grellmann, Hoyland, and others who have written on the subject. But the author, (continues Sir Walter,) has, besides their authority, personal occasion to know, that an individual, out of mere curiosity, and availing himself, with patience and assiduity, of such opportunities as offered, has made himself capable of conversing with any Gipsy whom he meets, or can, like the royal Hal, drink with any tinker, in his own language.* The astonishment

* Allowance must be made for the enthusiasm of the novelist.

excited among these vagrants, on finding a stranger participant of their mystery, occasions very ludicrous scenes. It is to be hoped this gentleman will publish the knowledge he possesses on so singular a topic. There are prudential reasons for postponing this disclosure at present, for, although much more reconciled to society since they have been less the objects of legal persecution, the Gipsies are still a ferocious and vindictive people.”*

* Abbotsford, 1st Dec., 1831.

CHAPTER I.

CONTINENTAL GIPSIES.

BEFORE giving an account of the Gipsies in Scotland, I shall, by way of introduction, briefly notice the periods of time at which they were observed in the different states on the continent of Europe, and point out the different periods at which their governments found it necessary to expel them from their respective territories. I shall also add a few facts illustrative of the manners of the continental tribes, for the purpose of showing that those in Scotland, England, and Ireland, are all branches of the same stock. I shall, likewise, add a few facts illustrative of the tribe who found their way into England. I am indebted for my information on the early history of the continental Gipsies, chiefly to the works of Grellmann, Hoyland and Bright.

It appears that none of these wanderers had been seen in Christendom before the year 1400.* But, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, this people first attracted notice, and, within a few years after their arrival, had spread themselves over the whole continent. The earliest mention which is made of them, was in the years 1414 and 1417, when they were observed in Germany. In 1418, they were found in Switzerland; in 1422, in Italy; in 1427, they are mentioned as being in the neighbourhood of Paris; and about the same time, in Spain.†

They seem to have received various appellations. In France, they were called *Bohemians*; in Holland, *Heydens*—heathens; in some parts of Germany, and in Sweden and Denmark, they were thought to be *Tartars*; but over Germany, in general, they were called *Zigeuners*, a word which means wanderers up and down. In Portugal, they received

* Sir Thomas Brown's vulgar errors. † Bright's travels in Hungary.

the name of *Siganos* ; in Spain, *Gitanos* ; and in Italy, *Cingari*. They were also called in Italy, Hungary, and Germany, *Tziganys* ; and in Transylvania, *Cyganis*. Among the Turks, and other eastern nations, they were denominated *Tschingenes* ; but the Moors and Arabians applied to them, perhaps, the most just appellation of any—*Charami*, robbers.*

“ When they arrived at Paris, 17th August, 1427, nearly all of them had their ears bored, with one or two silver rings in each, which, they said, were esteemed ornaments in their country. The men were black, their hair curled ; the women remarkably black, and all their faces scarred.”† Dr. Hurd, in his account of the different religions of the world, says, that the hair of these men was “ frizzled,” and that some of the women were witches, and “ had hair like a horse’s tail.” It is, I think, to be inferred from this passage, that the men had designedly curled their hair, and that the hair of the females was long and coarse—not the short, woolly hair of the African. I have, myself, seen English female Gipsies with hair as long, coarse, and thick as a black horse’s tail.

“ At the time of the first appearance of the Gipsies, no certain information seems to have been obtained as to the country from which they came. It is, however, supposed that they entered Europe in the south-east, probably through Transylvania. At first, they represented themselves as Egyptian pilgrims, and, under that character, obtained considerable respect during half a century ; being favoured by different potentates with passports, and letters of security. Gradually, however, they really became, or were fancied, troublesome, and Italy, Sweden, Denmark and Germany, successively attempted their expulsion, in the sixteenth century.”‡

With the exception of Hungary and Transylvania, it is believed that every state in Europe attempted either their expulsion or extermination ; but, notwithstanding the dreadful severity of the numerous laws and edicts promulgated against them, they remained in every part of Europe, in defiance of every effort made by their respective governments to get rid of their unwelcome guests.

* Hoyland’s historical survey of the Gipsies. † Ibid. ‡ Bright.

“German writers say that King Ferdinand of Spain, who esteemed it a good work to expatriate useful and profitable subjects—Jews, and even Moorish families—could much less be guilty of an impropriety, in laying hands on the mischievous progeny of Gipsies. The edict for their extermination was published in the year 1492. But, instead of passing the boundaries, they only slunk into hiding places, and shortly after appeared in as great numbers as before. The Emperor, Charles V, persecuted them afresh ; as did Philip II. Since that time, they nestled in again, and were threatened with another storm, but it blew over without taking effect.

“In France, Francis I passed an edict for their expulsion, and at the assembly of the states of Orleans, in 1561, all governors of cities received orders to drive them out with fire and sword. Nevertheless, in process of time, they collected again, and encreased to such a degree that, in 1612, a new order came out for their extermination. In the year 1572, they were compelled to retire from the territories of Milan and Parma ; and, at a period somewhat earlier, they were chased beyond the Venetian jurisdiction.

“They were not allowed the privilege of remaining in Denmark, as the code of Danish law specifies : ‘The Tartar Gipsies, who wander about everywhere, doing great damage to the people, by their lies, thefts and witchcraft, shall be taken into custody by every magistrate.’ Sweden was not more favourable, having attacked them at three different times. A very sharp order for their expulsion came out in 1662. The diet of 1723 published a second ; and that of 1727 repeated the foregoing, with additional severity.

“They were excluded from the Netherlands, under the pain of death, by Charles V, and afterwards, by the United States, in 1582. But the greatest number of sentences of exile have been pronounced against them in Germany. The beginning was made under Maximilian I, at the Augsburg Diet, in 1500 ; and the same business occupied the attention of the Diet in 1530, 1544, 1548, and 1551 ; and was also again enforced, in the improved police regulations of Frankfort, in 1577.”* The Germans entertained the notion that the Gipsies were spies for the Turks. They were not allowed to pass through, remain, or trade within the Empire. They were ordered to quit entirely the German dominions, by a

* Hoyland.

certain day, and whoever injured them, after that period, was considered to have committed no crime.

"But a general extermination never did happen, for the law banishing them passed in one state before it was thought of in the next, or when a like order had long become obsolete, and sunk into oblivion. These undesirable guests were, therefore, merely compelled to shift their quarters to an adjoining state, where they remained till the government began to clear them away, upon which the fugitives either retired whence they came, or went on progressively to a third place—thus making a continual circle."*

That almost the whole of Christendom had been so provoked by the conduct of the Gipsies as to have attempted their expulsion, or rather their extermination, merely because they were jugglers, fortune-tellers, astrologers, warlocks, witches and impostors, is a thing not for a moment to be supposed. I am inclined to believe that the true cause of the promulgation of the excessively sanguinary laws and edicts, for the extermination of the whole Gipsy nation in Europe, must be looked for in much more serious crimes than those mentioned; and that these greater offences can be no other than theft and robbery, and living upon the inhabitants of the countries through which they travelled, at free quarters, or what we, in Scotland, call *sorning*.† But, on the other hand, I am convinced that the Gipsies have committed few murders on individuals *out* of their own tribe. As far as our authorities go, the general character of these people seems to have been the same, wherever they have made their appearance on the face of the earth; and the chief and leading feature of that extraordinary character appears to me to have been, in general, an hereditary propensity to theft and robbery, in men, women and children.

In whatever country we find the Gipsies, their manners, habits, and cast of features are uniformly the same. Their occupations are in every respect the same. They were, on

* Grellmann.

† Dr. Hurd says, at page 785, "Our over credulous ancestors vainly imagined that those Gipsies or Bohemians were so many spies for the Turks; and that, in order to expiate the crimes which they had committed in their own country, they were condemned to steal from and rob the Christians."

[Living at free quarters by force, or masterful begging, or "*sorning*," is surely a trifling, though troublesome, offence for the original condition of a wandering tribe, which has so progressed as, at the present day, to fill some of the first positions in Scotland.—Ed.]

the continent, horse-dealers, innkeepers, workers in iron, musicians, astrologers, jugglers, and fortune-tellers by palmistry. They are also accused of cheating, lying, and witchcraft, and, in general, charged with being thieves and robbers. They roam up and down the country, without any fixed habitations, living in tents, and hawking small trifles of merchandise for the use of the people among whom they travel. The whole race were great frequenters of fairs. They seldom formed matrimonial alliances out of their own tribe.* It will be seen, in another part of this work, that the language of the continental Gipsies is the same as that of those in Scotland, England and Ireland. As to the religious opinions of the continental Gipsies, they appear to have had none at all. It is said they were "worse than heathens." "It is, in reality," says Twiss, "almost absurd to talk of the religion of this set of people, whose moral characters are so depraved as to make it evident they believe in nothing capable of being a check to their passions." "Indeed," adds Hoyland, "it is asserted that no Gipsy has any idea of submission to any fixed profession of faith." It appears to me that, to secure to themselves protection from the different governments, they only conformed outwardly to the customs and religion of the country in which they happened to reside at the time.

Cantemir, according to Grellmann, says that the Gipsies are dispersed all over Moldavia, where every baron has several families subject to him. In Wallachia and the Sclavonian countries they are quite as numerous. In Wallachia and Moldavia they are divided into two classes—the princely and boyardish. The former, according to Sulzer, amount to many thousands; but that is trifling in comparison with the latter, as there is not a single Boyard in Wallachia who has not at least three or four of them for slaves; the rich have often some hundreds under their command.† Grell-

* Hoyland.

† In the narrative of the Scottish Church Mission of Enquiry to the Jews, in 1839, are to be found the following remarks relative to the Gipsies of Wallachia:

"They are almost all slaves, bought and sold at pleasure. One was lately sold for 200 piastres, but the general price is 500. Perhaps £3 is the average price, and the female Gipsies are sold much cheaper. The sale is generally carried on by private bargain. The men are the best mechanics in the country; so that smiths and masons are taken from this class. The women are considered the best cooks, and therefore almost

mann divides those in Transylvania into four classes: 1st, city Gipsies, who are the most civilized of all, and maintain themselves by music, smith-work, selling old clothes, horse-dealing, &c.; 2d. gold-washers; 3d. tent Gipsies; and 4th. Egyptian Gipsies. These last are more filthy, and more addicted to stealing than any of the others. Those who are gold-washers, in Transylvania and the Banat, have no intercourse with others of their nation; nor do they like to be called Gipsies. They sift gold sand in summer, and in winter make trays and troughs, which they sell in an honest way. They seldom beg, and more rarely steal. Dr. Clarke says of the Wallachian Gipsies, that they are not an idle race; they ought rather to be described as a laborious race; and the majority honestly endeavour to earn a livelihood.

every wealthy family has a Gipsy cook. Their appearance is similar to that of the Gipsies in other countries; being all dark, with fine black eyes, and long black hair. They have a language peculiar to themselves, and though they seem to have no system of religion, yet are very superstitious in observing lucky and unlucky days. They are all fond of music, both vocal and instrumental, and excel in it. There is a class of them called the Turkish Gipsies, who have purchased their freedom from government; but these are few in number, and all from Turkey. Of these latter, there are twelve families in Galatz. The men are employed as horse-dealers, and the women in making bags, sacks, and such articles. In winter, they live in town, almost under ground; but in summer, they pitch their tents in the open air, for, though still within the bounds of the town, they would not live in their winter houses during summer."

That these Gipsies should be in a state of slavery is, perhaps, a more marked exception to their race than the Indians in Spanish America were to those found in the territories colonized by the Anglo-Saxons. The Empress Maria Theresa could make nothing of the Gipsies in Hungary, where they are said to be almost as little looked after as the wolves of the forest; so that the slavery of the Gipsies in Wallachia must be of a very nominal or mild nature, or the subjects of it must be far in excess of the demand, if £3 is the average price of a good smith or mason, and less for a good female cook. These Wallachian Gipsies evidently prefer a master whose property they will consider as their own, and whose protection will relieve them from the interference and oppression of others. A slavery that is not absolute or oppressive must gratify the vanity of the owner, and be easily borne by a race that is semi-civilized and despised by others around it.

Since the conclusion of the Russian war, the manumission of the Gipsies of the Principalities was debated and carried by a majority of something like thirteen against eleven; but I am not aware of its having been put in force. They are said to have been greatly attached to the late Sultan—calling him the "good father," for the interest he took in them. As spies, they rendered his generals efficient services, while contending with the Russians on the Danube.—*Ed.*

“Bessarabia, all Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, and Romania swarm with Gipsies ; even in Constantinople they are innumerable. In Romania, a large tract of Mount Hæmus, which they inhabit, has acquired from them the name of *Tschenghe Valken*—Gipsy Mountain. This district extends from the city of Aydos quite to Phillippopolis, and contains more Gipsies than any other province in the Turkish empire.

“They were universally to be found in Italy, insomuch that even Sicily and Sardinia were not free. But they were most numerous in the dominions of the Church ; probably because there was the worst police, with much superstition. By the former, they were left undisturbed ; and the latter enticed them to deceive the ignorant, as it afforded them an opportunity of obtaining a plentiful contribution by their fortune-telling and enchanted amulets. There was a general law throughout Italy, that no Gipsy should remain more than two nights in any one place. By this regulation, it is true, no place retained its guests long ; but no sooner was one gone than another came in his room : it was a continual circle, and quite as convenient to them as a perfect toleration would have been. Italy rather suffered than benefited by this law ; as, by keeping these people in constant motion, they would do more mischief there, than in places where they were permitted to remain stationary.

“In Poland and Lithuania, as well as in Courland, there are an amazing number of Gipsies. A person may live many years in Upper Saxony, or in the districts of Hanover and Brunswick, without seeing a single Gipsy. When one happens to stray into a village or town, he occasions as much disturbance as if the black gentleman with his cloven foot appeared ; he frightens children from their play, and draws the attention of the older people, till the police get hold of him, and make him again invisible. In some of the provinces of the Rhine, a Gipsy is a very common sight. Some years ago, there were such numbers of them in the Duchy of Wurtemberg, that they were seen lying about everywhere ; but the government ordered departments of soldiers to drive them from their holes and lurking-places throughout the country, and then transported the congregated swarm, in the same manner as they were treated by the Duke of Deuxponts. In France, before the Revolution, there were

but few Gipsies, for the obvious reason that every Gipsy who could be apprehended fell a sacrifice to the police.”*

As regards the Gipsies of Spain, Dr. Bright remarks : That the disposition of the Gitano is more inclined to a fixed residence than that of the Gipsy of other countries, is beyond doubt. The generality are the settled inhabitants of considerable towns, and, although the occupations of some necessarily lead them to a more vagrant life, the proportion is small who do not consider some hovel in a suburb as a home. ‘Money is in the city—not in the country,’ is a saying frequently in their mouths. In the vilest quarters of every large town of the southern provinces, there are Gitanos living together, sometimes occupying whole barriers. But Seville is, perhaps, the spot in which the largest proportion is found. Their principal occupation is the manufacture and sale of articles of iron. Their quarters may always be traced by the ring of the hammer and anvil, and many amass considerable wealth. An inferior class have the exclusive trade in second-hand articles, which they sell at the doors of their dwellings, or at benches at the entrance of towns, or by the sides of frequented walks. A still inferior order wander about, mending pots, and selling tongs and other trifling articles. In Cadiz, they monopolize the trade of butchering, and frequently amass wealth. Others, again, exclusively fill the office of Matador of the Bull Plaza, while the Tereros are for the most part of the same race. Others are employed as dressers of mules and asses ; some as figure-dancers, and many as performers in the theatre. Some gain a livelihood by their musical talents. Dancing, singing, music and fortune-telling are the only objects of general pursuit for the females. Sometimes they dance in the inferior theatres, and sing and dance in the streets. Palmistry is one of their most productive avocations. In Seville, a few make and sell an inferior kind of mat. Besides these, there is a class of Gipsies in Spain who lead a vagrant life

* Grellmann.—I would suppose that these severe edicts of the French would drive the Gipsies to adopt the costume and manners of the other inhabitants. In this way they would disappear from the public eye. The officers of justice would of course direct their attention to what would be understood to be Gipsies—that is tented Gipsies, or those who professed the ways of Gipsies, such as fortune telling. I have met with a French Gipsy in the streets of New York, engaged as a dealer in candy.—Ed.

throughout—residing chiefly in the woods and mountains, and known as mountaineers. These rarely visit towns, and live by fraud and pillage. There are also others who wander about the country—such as tinkers, dancers, singers, and jobbers in asses and mules.

Bishop Pococke, prior to 1745, mentions having met with Gipsies in the northern part of Syria, where he found them in great numbers, passing for Mahomedans, living in tents or caravans, dealing in milch cows, when near towns, manufacturing coarse carpets, and having a much better character than their relations in Hungary or England. By the census of the Crimea, in 1793, the population was set down at 157,125, of which 3,225 were Gipsies. Bishop Heber states that the Persian Gipsies are of much better caste, and much richer than those of India, Russia or England. In India, he says, the Gipsies are the same tall, fine-limbed, bony, slender people, with the same large, black, brilliant eyes, lowering forehead, and long hair, curled at the extremities, which are to be met with on a common in England. He mentions, in his journal of travels through Bengal, having met with a Gipsy camp on the Ganges. The women and children followed him, begging, and had no clothes on them, except a coarse kind of veil, thrown back from the shoulders, and a ragged cloth, wrapped round their waists, like a petticoat. One of the women was very pretty, and the forms of all the three were such as a sculptor would have been glad to take as his models.

Besides those in Europe, it is stated by Grellmann that the Gipsies are also scattered over Asia, and are to be found in the centre of Africa. In Europe alone, he supposes (in 1782), their number will amount to between seven and eight hundred thousand. So numerous did they become in France, that the king, in 1545, sixteen years before they were expelled from that kingdom, entertained an idea of embodying four thousand of them, to act as pioneers in taking Boulogne, then in possession of England. It is impossible to ascertain, at the present day, how many Gipsies might be even in a parish; but, taking in the whole world, there must be an immense number in existence.

About the time the Gipsies first appeared in Europe, their chiefs, under the titles of dukes, earls, lords, counts, and knights of Little Egypt, rode up and down the country on

horseback, dressed in gay apparel, and attended by a train of ragged and miserable inferiors, having, also, hawks and hounds in their retinue. It appears to me, that the excessive vanity of these chiefs had induced them, in imitation of the customs of civilized society, to assume these high-sounding European titles of honour. I have not observed, on record, any form of government, laws or customs, by which the internal affairs of the tribe, on the Continent, were regulated. On these important points, if I am not mistaken, all the authors, with the exception of Grellmann, who have written on the Gipsies, are silent. Grellmann says of the Hungarian Gipsies: "They still continue the custom among themselves of dignifying certain persons, whom they make heads over them, and call by the exalted Sclavonian title of Waywode. To choose their Waywode, the Gipsies take the opportunity, when a great number of them are assembled in one place, commonly in the open field. The elected person is lifted up three times, amidst the loudest acclamation, and confirmed in his dignity by presents. His wife undergoes the same ceremony. When this solemnity is performed, they separate with great conceit, imagining themselves people of more consequence than electors returning from the choice of an emperor. Every one who is of a family descended from a former Waywode is eligible; but those who are best clothed, not very poor, of large stature, and about the middle age, have generally the preference. The particular distinguishing mark of dignity is a large whip, hanging over the shoulder. His outward deportment, his walk and air, also plainly show his head to be filled with notions of authority." According to the same authority, the Waywode of the Gipsies in Courland is distinguished from the principals of the hordes in other countries, being not only much respected by his own people, but even by the Courland nobility. He is esteemed a man of high rank, and is frequently to be met with at entertainments, and card parties, in the first families, where he is always a welcome guest. His dress is uncommonly rich, in comparison with others of his tribe; generally silk in summer, and constantly velvet in winter.

As a specimen of the manners and ferocious disposition of the German Gipsies, so late as the year 1726, I shall here transcribe a few extracts from an article published in Blackwood's Magazine, for January, 1818. This interesting arti-

cle is partly an abridged translation, or rather the substance, of a German work on the Gipsies, entitled "A Circumstantial Account of the Famous Egyptian Band of Thieves, and Robbers, and Murderers, whose Leaders were executed at Giessen, by Cord, and Sword, and Wheel, on the 14th and 15th November, 1726, &c." It is edited by Dr. John Benjamin Wiessenburch, an assessor of the criminal tribunal by which these malefactors were condemned, and published at Frankfort and Leipsic, in the year 1727. The translator of this work is Sir Walter Scott, who obligingly offered me the use of his "scraps" on this subject. The following are the details in his own words.

"A curious preliminary dissertation records some facts respecting the German Gipsies, which are not uninteresting.

"From the authorities collected by Wiessenburch, it appears that these wanderers first appeared in Germany during the reign of Sigismund. The exact year has been disputed; but it is generally placed betwixt 1416 and 1420. They appeared in various bands, under chiefs, to whom they acknowledged obedience, and who assumed the titles of dukes and earls. These leaders originally affected a certain degree of consequence, travelling well equipped, and on horseback, and bringing hawks and hounds in their retinue. Like John Faw, 'Lord of Little Egypt,' they sometimes succeeded in imposing upon the Germans the belief in their very apocryphal dignity, which they assumed during their lives, and recorded upon their tombs, as appears from three epitaphs, quoted by Dr. Wiessenburch. One is in a convent at Steinbach, and records that on St. Sebastians' eve, 1445, 'died the Lord Pannel, Duke of Little Egypt, and Baron of Hirschhorn, in the same land.' A monumental inscription at Bautmer, records the death of the 'Noble Earl Peter, of Lesser Egypt, in 1453;' and a third, at Pferz, as late as 1498, announces the death of the 'high-born, Lord John, Earl of Little Egypt, to whose soul God be gracious and merciful.'

"In describing the state of the German Gipsies, in 1726, the author whom we are quoting gives the leading features proper to those in other countries. Their disposition to wandering, to idleness, to theft, to polygamy, or rather promiscuous licence, are all commemorated; nor are the women's pretensions to fortune-telling, and their practice of

stealing children, omitted. Instead of travelling in very large bands, as at their first arrival, they are described as forming small parties, in which the females are far more numerous than the men, and which are each under command of a leader, chosen rather from reputation than by right of birth. The men, unless when engaged in robbery or theft, lead a life of absolute idleness, and are supported by what the women can procure by begging, stealing or telling fortunes. These resources are so scanty that they often suffer the most severe extremities of hunger and cold. Some of the Gipsies executed at Giessen pretended that they had not eaten a morsel of bread for four days before they were apprehended; yet are they so much attached to freedom, and licence of this wandering life, that, notwithstanding its miseries, it has not only been found impossible to reclaim the native Gipsies, who claim it by inheritance, but even those who, not born in that state, have associated themselves with their bands, and become so wedded to it, as to prefer it to all others.*

"As an exception, Wiessenburch mentions some gangs, where the men, as in Scotland, exercise the profession of travelling smiths, or tinkers, or deal in pottery, or practise as musicians. Finally, he notices that in Hungary the gangs assumed their names from the countries which they chiefly traversed, as the band of Upper Saxony, of Brandenburg, and so forth. They resented, to extremity, any attempt on the part of other Gipsies to intrude on their province; and such interference often led to battles, in which they shot each other with as little remorse as they would have done to dogs.† By these acts of cruelty to each other, they became gradually familiarized with blood, as well as with arms, to which another cause contributed, in the beginning of the 18th century.

"In former times, these outcasts were not permitted to

* The natives here alluded to were evidently Germans, married to Gipsy women, or Germans brought up from infancy with the Gipsies, or mixed Gipsies, taking after Germans in point of appearance.—Ed.

† This is the only continental writer, that I am aware of, who mentions the circumstance of the Gipsies having districts to themselves, from which others of their race were excluded. This author also speaks of the German Gipsies stealing children. John Bunyan admits the same practice in England, when he compares his feelings, as a sinner, to those of a child carried off by Gipsies. He gives the Gipsy *women* credit for this practice.—Ed.

bear arms in the service of any Christian power, but the long wars of Louis XIV had abolished this point of delicacy ; and both in the French army, and those of the confederates, the stoutest and boldest of the Gipsies were occasionally enlisted, by choice or compulsion. These men generally tired soon of the rigour of military discipline, and escaping from their regiments, on the first opportunity, went back to their forests, with some knowledge of arms, and habits bolder and more ferocious than those of their predecessors. Such deserters soon become leaders among the tribes, whose enterprises became, in proportion, more audacious and desperate.

“ In Germany, as in most other kingdoms of Europe, severe laws had been directed against this vagabond people, and the Landgraves of Hesse had not been behind-hand in such denunciations. They were, on their arrest, branded as vagabonds, punished with stripes, and banished from the circle ; and, in case of their return, were put to death without mercy. These measures only served to make them desperate. Their bands became more strong and more open in their depredations. They often marched as strong as fifty or a hundred armed men ; bade defiance to the ordinary police, and plundered the villages in open day ; wounded and slew the peasants, who endeavoured to protect their property ; and skirmished, in some instances successfully, with parties of soldiers and militia, dispatched against them. Their chiefs, on these occasions, were John La Fortune, a determined villain, otherwise named Hemperla ; another called the Great Gallant ; his brother, Antony Alexander, called the Little Gallant ; and others, entitled Lorries, Lampert, Gabriel, &c. Their ferocity may be judged of from the following instances :

“ On the 10th October, 1724, a land-lieutenant, or officer of police, named Emerander, set off with two assistants to disperse a band of Gipsies who had appeared near Hirzenhayn, in the territory of Stolberg. He seized on two or three stragglers whom he found in the village, and whom, females as well as males, he seems to have treated with much severity. Some, however, escaped to a large band which lay in an adjacent forest, who, under command of the Great Gallant, Hemperla, Antony Alexander, and others, immediately put themselves in motion to rescue their com-

rades, and avenge themselves of Emerander. The land-lieutenant had the courage to ride out to meet them, with his two attendants, at the passage of a bridge, where he fired his pistol at the advancing gang, and called out 'charge,' as if he had been at the head of a party of cavalry. The Gipsies, however, aware, from the report of the fugitives, how weakly the officer was accompanied, continued to advance to the end of the bridge, and ten or twelve, dropping each on one knee, gave fire on Emerander, who was then obliged to turn his horse and ride off, leaving his two assistants to the mercy of the banditti. One of these men, called Hempel, was instantly beaten down, and suffered, especially at the hands of the Gipsy women, much cruel and abominable outrage. After stripping him of every rag of his clothes, they were about to murder the wretch outright; but at the earnest instance of the landlord of the inn, they contented themselves with beating him dreadfully, and imposing on him an oath that he never more would persecute any Gipsy, or save any *fleshman*, (dealer in human flesh,) for so they called the officers of justice or police.*

"The other assistant of Emerander made his escape. But the principal was not so fortunate. When the Gipsies had wrought their wicked pleasure on Hempel, they compelled the landlord of the little inn to bring them a flagon of brandy, in which they mingled a charge of gunpowder and three pinches of salt; and each, partaking of this singular beverage, took a solemn oath that they would stand by each other until they had cut thongs, as they expressed it, out of the fleshman's hide. The Great Gallant at the same time distributed to them, out of a little box, billets, which each was directed to swallow, and which were supposed to render them invulnerable.

"Thus inflamed and encouraged, the whole route, amounting to fifty well armed men, besides women armed with clubs and axes, set off with horrid screams to a neighbour-

* Great allowance ought to be made for the conduct of these Gipsies. Even at the present day, a Gipsy, in many parts of Germany, is not allowed to enter a town; nor will the inhabitants permit him to live in the street in which they dwell. He has therefore to go somewhere, and live in some way or other. In speaking of the Gipsies, people never take these circumstances into account. The Gipsies alluded to in the text seem to have been very cruelly treated, in the first place, by the authorities.—En.

ing hamlet, called Glazhutte, in which the object of their resentment sought refuge. They took military possession of the streets, posting sentinels to prevent interruption or attack from the alarmed inhabitants. Their leaders then presented themselves before the inn, and demanded that Emerander should be delivered up to them. When the inn-keeper endeavoured to elude their demand, they forced their way into the house, and finding the unhappy object of pursuit concealed in a garret, Hemperla and others fired their muskets at him, then tore his clothes from his body, and precipitated him down the staircase, where he was dispatched with many wounds.

“Meanwhile, the inhabitants of the village began to take to arms; and one of them attempted to ring the alarm-bell, but was prevented by an armed Gipsy, stationed for that purpose. At length their bloody work being ended, the Gipsies assembled and retreated out of the town, with shouts of triumph, exclaiming that the fleshman was slain, displaying their spoils and hands stained with blood, and headed by the Great Gallant, riding on the horse of the murdered officer.

“I shall select from the volume another instance of this people’s cruelty still more detestable, since even vengeance or hostility could not be alleged for its stimulating cause, as in the foregoing narrative. A country clergyman, named Heinsius, the pastor of a village called Dorsdorff, who had the misfortune to be accounted a man of some wealth, was the subject of this tragedy.

“Hemperla, already mentioned, with a band of ten Gipsies, and a villain named Essper George, who had joined himself with them, though not of their nation by birth, beset the house of the unfortunate minister, with a resolution to break in and possess themselves of his money; and if interrupted by the peasants, to fire upon them, and repel force by force. With this desperate intention, they surrounded the parsonage-house at midnight; and their leader, Hemperla, having cut a hole through the cover of the sink or gutter, endeavoured to creep into the house through that passage, holding in his hand a lighted torch made of straw. The daughter of the parson chanced, however, to be up, and in the kitchen, at this late hour, by which fortunate circumstance she escaped the fate of her father and mother. When the Gipsy saw

there was a person in the kitchen, he drew himself back out of the gutter, and ordered his gang to force the door, regarding the noise which accompanied this violence as little as if the place had been situated in a wilderness, instead of a populous hamlet. Others of the gang were posted at the windows of the house, to prevent the escape of the inmates. Nevertheless, the young woman, already mentioned, let herself down from a window which had escaped their notice, and ran to seek assistance for her parents.

"In the meanwhile the Gipsies had burst open the outward door of the house, with a beam of wood which chanced to be lying in the court-yard. They next forced the door of the sitting apartment, and were met by the poor clergyman, who prayed them at least to spare his life and that of his wife. But he spoke to men who knew no mercy; Hemperla struck him on the breast with a torch; and receiving the blow as a signal for death, the poor man staggered back to the table, and sinking in a chair, leaned his head on his hand, and expected the mortal blow. In this posture Hemperla shot him dead with a pistol. The wife of the clergyman endeavoured to fly, on witnessing the murder of her husband, but was dragged back, and slain by a pistol-shot, fired either by Essper George, or by a Gipsy called Christian. By a crime so dreadful those murderers only gained four silver cups, fourteen silver spoons, some trifling articles of apparel, and about twenty-two florins in money. They might have made more important booty, but the sentinel, whom they left on the outside, now intimated to them that the hamlet was alarmed, and that it was time to retire, which they did accordingly, undisturbed and in safety.

"The Gipsies committed many enormities similar to those above detailed, and arrived at such a pitch of audacity as even to threaten the person of the Landgrave himself; an enormity at which Dr. Wiessenburch, who never introduces the name or titles of that prince without printing them in letters of at least an inch long, expresses becoming horror. This was too much to be endured. Strong detachments of troops and militia scoured the country in different directions, and searched the woods and caverns which served the banditti for places of retreat. These measures were for some time attended with little effect. The Gipsies had the advantages of a perfect knowledge of the country, and excellent

intelligence. They baffled the efforts of the officers detached against them, and, on one or two occasions, even engaged them with advantage. And when some females, unable to follow the retreat of the men, were made prisoners on such an occasion, the leaders caused it to be intimated to the authorities at Giessen that if their women were not set at liberty, they would murder and rob on the high roads, and plunder and burn the country. This state of warfare lasted from 1718 until 1726, during which period the subjects of the Landgrave suffered the utmost hardships, as no man was secure against nocturnal surprise of his property and person.

"At length, in the end of 1725, a heavy and continued storm of snow compelled the Gipsy hordes to abandon the woods which had long served them as a refuge, and to approach more near to the dwellings of men. As their movements could be traced and observed, the land-lieutenant, Krocker, who had been an assistant to the murdered Emerander, received intelligence of a band of Gipsies having appeared in the district of Sohnsassenheim, at a village called Fauerbach. Being aided by a party of soldiers and volunteers, he had the luck to secure the whole gang, being twelve men and women. Among these was the notorious Hemperla, who was dragged by the heels from an oven in which he was attempting to conceal himself. Others were taken in the same manner, and imprisoned at Giessen, with a view to their trial.

"Numerous acts of theft, and robbery, and murder were laid to the charge of these unfortunate wretches; and, according to the existing laws of the empire, they were interrogated under torture. They were first tormented by means of thumb-screws, which they did not seem greatly to regard; the Spanish boots, or 'leg-vices,' were next applied, and seldom failed to extort confession. Hemperla alone set both means at defiance, which induced the judges to believe he was possessed of some spell against these agonies. Having in vain searched his body for the supposed charm, they caused his hair to be cut off; on which he himself observed that, had they not done so, he could have stood the torture for some time longer. As it was, his resolution gave way, and he made, under the second application of the Spanish boots, a full confession, not only of the murders of which he was accused, but of various other crimes. While he was

in this agony, the judges had the cruelty to introduce his mother, a noted Gipsy woman, called the crone, into the torture-chamber ; who shrieked fearfully, and tore her face with her nails, on perceiving the condition of her son, and still more on hearing him acknowledge his guilt.

"Evidence of the guilt of the other prisoners was also obtained from their confessions, with or without torture, and from the testimony of witnesses examined by the fiscal. Sentence was finally passed on them, condemning four Gipsies, among whom were Hemperla and the Little Gallant, to be broken on the wheel, nine others to be hanged, and thirteen, of whom the greater part were women, to be beheaded. They underwent their doom with great firmness, upon the 14th and 15th November, 1726.

"The volume contains some rude prints, representing the murders committed by the Gipsies, and the manner of their execution. There are also two prints representing the portraits of the principal criminals, in which, though the execution be indifferent, the Gipsy features may be clearly traced."

Leaving this view of the character of the continental Gipsies, we may take the following as illustrative of one of its brighter aspects. So late as the time of the celebrated Baron Trenck, it would appear that Germany was still infested with prodigiously large bands of Gipsies. In a forest near Ginnen, to which he had fled, to conceal himself from the pursuit of his persecutors, the Baron says : "Here we fell in with a gang of Gipsies, (or rather banditti,) amounting to four hundred men, who dragged me to their camp. They were mostly French and Prussian deserters, and, thinking me their equal, would force me to become one of their band. But venturing to tell my story to their leader, he presented me with a crown, gave us a small portion of bread and meat, and suffered us to depart in peace, after having been four-and-twenty hours in their company."*

I shall conclude the notices of the continental Gipsies by some extracts from an article published in a French periodical work, for September, 1802, on the Gipsies of the Pyrenees ; who resemble, in many points, the inferior class of our Scottish Tinklers, about the beginning of the French war, more, perhaps, than those of any other country in Europe.

* Life of Baron Trenck, translated by Thomas Holcroft, Vol. I., page 138.

"There exists, in the department of the Eastern Pyrenees, a people distinct from the rest of the inhabitants, of a foreign origin, and without any settled habits. It seems to have fixed its residence there for a considerable time. It changes its situation, multiplies there, and never connects itself by marriage with the other inhabitants. This people are called *Gitanos*, a Spanish word which signifies Egyptians. There are many *Gitanos* in Catalonia, who have similar habits to the above-mentioned, but who are very strictly watched. They have all the vices of those Egyptians, or Bohemians, who formerly used to wander over the world, telling fortunes, and living at the expense of superstition and credulity. These *Gitanos*, less idle and less wanderers than their predecessors, are afraid of publicly professing the art of fortune-tellers; but their manner of life is scarcely different.

"They scatter themselves among villages, and lonesome farms, where they steal fruit, poultry, and often even cattle; in short, everything that is portable. They are almost always abroad, incessantly watching an opportunity to practise their thievery; they hide themselves with much dexterity from the search of the police. Their women, in particular, have an uncommon dexterity in pilfering. When they enter a shop, they are watched with the utmost care; but with every precaution they are not free from their rapines. They excel, above all, in hiding the pieces of silver which are given in exchange for gold, which they never fail to offer in payment, and they are so well hidden that they are often obliged to be undressed before restitution can be obtained.

"The *Gitanos* affect, externally, a great attachment to the Catholic religion; and if one was to judge from the number of reliques they carry about with them, one would believe them exceedingly devout; but all who have well observed them assure us they are as ignorant as hypocritical, and that they practise secretly a religion of their own. It is not rare to see their women, who have been lately brought to bed, have their children baptized several times, in different places, in order to obtain money from persons at their ease, whom they choose for godfathers. Everything announces among them that moral degradation which must necessarily attach to a miserable, insulated caste, as strangers to society, which only suffers it through an excess of contempt.

"The *Gitanos* are disgustingly filthy, and almost all co-

vered with rags. They have neither tables, chairs, nor beds, but sit and eat on the ground. They are crowded in huts, pell-mell, in straw ; and their neglect of the decorum of society, so dangerous to morals, must have the most melancholy consequences on wretched vagabonds, abandoned to themselves. They consequently are accused of giving themselves up to every disorder of the most infamous debauchery, and to respect neither the ties of blood nor the protecting laws of the virtues of families.

“ They feed on rotten poultry and fish, dogs and stinking cats, which they seek for with avidity ; and when this resource fails them, they live on the entrails of animals, or other aliments of the lowest price. They leave their meat but a very few minutes on the fire, and the place where they cook it exhales an infectious smell.

“ They speak the Catalonian dialect, but they have, besides, a language to themselves, unintelligible to the natives of the country, from whom they are very careful to hide the knowledge of it.

“ The Gitanos are tanned like the mulattoes, of a size above mediocrity, well formed, active, robust, supporting all the changes of seasons, and sleeping in the open fields, whenever their interest requires it. Their features are irregular, and show them to belong to a transplanted race. They have the mouth very wide, thick lips, and high cheek-bones.

“ As the distrust they inspire causes them to be carefully watched, it is not always possible for them to live by stealing : they then have recourse to industry, and a trifling trade, which seems to have been abandoned to them ; they show animals, and attend the fairs and markets, to sell or exchange mules and asses, which they know how to procure at a cheap rate. They are commonly cast-off animals, which they have the art to dress up, and they are satisfied, in appearance, with a moderate profit, which, however, is always more than is supposed, because they feed these animals at the expense of the farmers. They ramble all night, in order to steal fodder ; and whatever precautions may have been taken against them, it is not possible to be always guarded against their address.

“ Happily the Gitanos are not murderers. It would, without doubt, be important to examine if it is to the natural goodness of their disposition, to their frugality, and the few

wants they feel in their state of half savage, that is to be attributed the sentiment that repels them from great crimes, or if this disposition arises from their habitual state of alarm, or from that want of courage which must be a necessary consequence of the infamy in which they are plunged.*

* *Annals de Statistique*, No. III, page 31-37.—What the writer of this article says of the aversion which the Gipsies have to the shedding of human blood, *not of their own fraternity*, appears to have been universal among the tribe; but, on the other hand, they seem to have had little or no hesitation in putting to death *those of their own tribe*. This writer also says, that the Gipsies of the Pyrenees have a religion of their own, which they practise *secretly*, without mentioning what this secret religion is. It is probable that his remark is applicable to the sacrifice of horses, as described in chapter viii.

CHAPTER II.

ENGLISH GIPSIES.

THE first arrival of the Gipsies in England appears to have been about the year 1512,* but this does not seem to be quite certain. It is probable they may have arrived there at an earlier period. The author from which the fact is derived published his work in 1612, and states, generally, that "this kind of people, about a hundred years ago, began to gather an head, about the southern parts. And this, I am informed and can gather, was their beginning: Certain Egyptians, banished their country, (belike not for their good condition,) arrived here in England; who, for quaint tricks and devices, not known here at that time among us, were esteemed, and held in great admiration; insomuch that many of our English loiterers joined with them, and in time learned their crafty cozening.

"The speech which they used was the right Egyptian language, with whom our Englishmen conversing at least learned their language. These people, continuing about the country, and practising their cozening art, purchased themselves great credit among the country people, and got much by palmistry and telling of fortunes; insomuch that they pitifully cozened poor country girls both of money, silver spoons, and the best of their apparel, or any goods they could make."†

From this author it is collected they had a leader of the name of Giles Hather, who was termed their king; and a woman of the name of Calot was called queen. These, riding through the country on horseback, and in strange attire, had a pretty train after them.‡

* Hoyland.

† A quarto work by S. R., published to detect and expose the art of juggling and legerdemain, in 1612.

‡ Hoyland.

It appears, from this account, that the Gipsies had been observed on the continent about a hundred years before they visited England. According to Dr. Bright, they seemed to have roamed up and down the continent of Europe, without molestation, for about half a century, before their true character was perfectly known. If 1512 was really the year in which these people first set foot in England, it would seem that the English government had not been so easily nor so long imposed on as the kings of Scotland, and the authorities of Europe generally. For we find that, within about the space of ten years from this period, they are, by the 10th chapter of the 22d Henry VIII, denominated "an outlandish people, calling themselves Egyptians, using no craft nor feat of merchandise, who have come into this realm, and gone from shire to shire, and place to place, in great company; and used great subtlety and crafty means to deceive the people—bearing them in hand that they, by palmistry, could tell men's and women's fortunes; and so, many times, by craft and subtlety, have deceived the people for their money; and also have committed many heinous felonies and robberies." As far back as the year 1549, they had become very troublesome in England, for, on the 22d June of that year, according to Burnet's History of the Reformation, "there was privy search made through all Sussex for all vagabonds, Gipsies, conspirators, prophesiers, players, and such like."

△ The Gipsies in England still continued to commit numberless thefts and robberies, in defiance of the existing statutes; so that each succeeding law enacted against them became severer than the one which preceded it. The following is an extract from the 27th Henry VIII: "Whereas, certain outlandish people, who do not profess any craft or trade whereby to maintain themselves, but go about in great numbers, from place to place, using insidious means to impose on his majesty's subjects, making them believe that they understand the art of foretelling to men and women their good and evil fortunes, by looking in their hands, whereby they frequently defraud people of their money; likewise are guilty of thefts and highway robberies: It is hereby ordered that the said vagrants, commonly called Egyptians, in case as thieves and rascals . . . and on the importation of any such Egyptians, he, the importer, shall

forfeit forty pounds for every trespass." So much had the conduct of the Gipsies exasperated the government of Queen Elizabeth, that it was enacted, during her reign, that "If any person, being fourteen years, whether natural born subject or stranger, who had been seen in the fellowship of such persons, or disguised like them, and remain with them one month at once, or at several times, it should be felony without benefit of clergy."* It would thus appear that, when the Gipsies first arrived in England, they had not kept their language a secret, as is now the case; for some of the Englishmen of that period had acquired it by associating with them.†

In carrying out the foregoing extraordinary enactments, the public was at the expense of exporting the Gipsies to the continent; and it may reasonably be assumed that great numbers of these unhappy people were executed under these sanguinary laws. A few years before the restoration of Charles II, thirteen Gipsies were executed "at one Suffolk assize." This appears to have been the last instance of inflicting the penalty of death on these unfortunate people in England, merely because they were Gipsies.‡ But although these laws of blood are now repealed, the English Gipsies are liable, at the present day, to be proceeded against under the Vagrant Act; as these statutes declare all those persons "pretending to be Gipsies, or wandering in the habit and form of Egyptians, shall be deemed rogues and vagabonds."

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth it was thought England contained above 10,000 Gipsies; and Mr. Hoyland, in his historical survey of these people, supposes that there are 18,000 of the race in Britain at the present day. A member of Parliament, it is reported, stated, in the House of Commons, that there were not less than 36,000 Gipsies in Great Britain. I am inclined to believe that the statement of the latter will be nearest the truth; as I am convinced that the greater part of all those persons who traverse England with earthenware, in carts and waggons, are a superior class of Gipsies. Indeed, a Scottish Gipsy informed me,

* English acts of Parliament.

† This does not appear to be necessarily the case. These Englishmen may have married Gipsies, become Gipsies by adoption, and so learned the language, as happens at the present day.—Ed. ‡ Hoyland.

that almost all those people are actually Gipsies. Now Mr. Hoyland takes none of these potters into his account, when he estimates the Gipsy population at only 18,000 souls. Besides, Gipsies have informed me that Ireland contains a great many of the tribe; many of whom are now finding their way into Scotland.*

I am inclined to think that the greater part of the English Gipsies live more apart from the other inhabitants of the country, reside more in tents, and exhibit a great deal more of their pristine manners, than their brethren do in Scotland.†

The English Gipsies also travel in Scotland, with earthenware in carts and waggons. A body of them, to the number of six tents, with sixteen horses, encamped, on one occasion, on the farm of Kingledoors, near the source of the Tweed. They remained on the ground from Saturday night till about ten o'clock on Monday morning, before they struck their tents and waggons.

At St. Boswell's fair I once inspected a horde of English Gipsies, encamped at the side of a hedge, on the Jedburgh road as it enters St. Boswell's Green. Their name was Blewett, from the neighbourhood of Darlington. The chief possessed two tents, two large carts laden with earthenware, four horses and mules, and five large dogs. He was attended by two old females and ten young children. One of the women was the mother of fourteen, and the other the mother of fifteen, children. This chief and the two females were the most swarthy and barbarous looking people I ever saw. They had, however, two beautiful children with them,

* The number of the British Gipsies mentioned here is greatly understated. See *Disquisition on the Gipsies*.—Ed.

† In no part of the world is the Gipsy life more in accordance with the general idea that the Gipsy is like Cain—a wanderer on the face of the earth—than in England; for there, the covered cart and the little tent are the houses of the Gipsy; and he seldom remains more than three days in the same place. So conducive is the climate of England to beauty, that nowhere else is the appearance of the race so prepossessing as in that country. Their complexion is dark, but not disagreeably so; their faces are oval, their features regular, their foreheads rather low, and their hands and feet small. The men are taller than the English peasantry, and far more active. They all speak the English language with fluency, and in their gait and demeanour are easy and graceful; in both respects standing in striking contrast with the peasantry, who, in speech, are slow and uncouth, and, in manner, dogged and brutal.—*Borrow*.—Ed.

about five years of age, with light flaxen hair, and very fair complexions. The old Gipsy women said they were twins; but they might have been stolen from different parents, for all that, as there was nothing about them that had the slightest resemblance to any one of the horde that claimed them. Apparently much care was taken of them, as they were very cleanly and neatly kept.*

This Gipsy potter was a thick-set, stout man, above the middle size. He was dressed in an old dark-blue frock coat, with a profusion of black, greasy hair, which covered the upper part of his broad shoulders. He wore a high-crowned, narrow-brimmed, old hat, with a lock of his black hair hanging down before each ear, in the same manner as the Spanish Gipsies are described by Swinburn. He also wore a pair of old full-topped boots, pressed half way down his legs, and wrinkled about his ankles, like buskins. His visage was remarkably dark and gloomy. He walked up and down the market alone, without speaking to any one, with a peculiar air of independence about him, as he twirled in his hand, in the Gipsy manner, by way of amusement, a strong bludgeon, about three feet long, which he held by the centre. I happened to be speaking to a surgeon in the fair, at the time the Gipsy passed me, when I observed to him that that strange-looking man was a Gipsy; at which the surgeon only laughed, and said he did not believe any such thing. To satisfy him, I followed the Gipsy, at a little distance, till he led me straight to his tents at the Jedburgh road already mentioned.

This Gipsy band had none of their wares unpacked, nor were they selling anything in the market. They were cooking a lamb's head and pluck, in a pan suspended from a triangle of rods of iron, while beside it lay an abundance of small potatoes, in a wooden dish. The females wore black Gipsy bonnets. The visage of the oldest one was remarkably long, her chin resting on her breast. These three old Gipsies were, altogether, so dark, grim, and outlandish-looking, that they had little or no appearance of being natives of Britain. On enquiring if they were Gipsies,

* It does not follow, from what our author says about these two children, that they were stolen. I have seen some of the children of English Gipsies as fair as any Saxon. It sometimes happens that the flaxen hair of a Gipsy child will change into raven black before he reaches manhood.—Ed.

and could speak the language, the oldest female gave me the following answer : " We are potters, and strangers in this land. The people are civil unto us. I say, God bless the people ; God bless them all." She spoke these words in a decided, emphatic, and solemn tone, as if she believed herself possessed of the power to curse or bless at pleasure. On turning my back, to leave them, I observed them burst out a laughing ; making merry, as I supposed, at the idea of having deceived me as to the tribe to which they belonged.

The following anecdote will give some idea of the manner of life of the Gipsies in England.

A man, whom I knew, happened to lose his way, one dark night, in Cambridgeshire. After wandering up and down for some time, he observed a light, at a considerable distance from him, within the skirts of a wood, and, being overjoyed at the discovery, he directed his course toward it ; but, before reaching the fire, he was surprised at hearing a man, a little way in advance, call out to him, in a loud voice, " Peace or not peace?" The benighted traveller, glad at hearing the sound of a human voice, immediately answered, " Peace ; I am a poor Scotchman, and have lost my way in the dark." " You can come forward then," rejoined the sentinel. When the Scotchman advanced, he found a family of Gipsies, with only one tent ; but, on being conducted further into the wood, he was introduced to a great company of Gipsies. They were busily employed in roasting several whole sheep—turning their carcasses before large fires, on long wooden poles, instead of iron spits. The racks on which the spits turned were also made of wood, driven into the ground, cross-ways, like the letter X. The Gipsies were exceedingly kind to the stranger, causing him to partake of the victuals which they had prepared for their feast. He remained with them the whole night, eating and drinking, and dancing with his merry entertainers, as if he had been one of themselves. When day dawned, the Scotchman counted twelve tents within a short distance of each other. On examining his position, he found himself a long way out of his road ; but a party of the Gipsies voluntarily offered their services, and went with him for several miles, and, with great kindness, conducted him to the road from which he had wandered.

The crimes of some of the English Gipsies have greatly exceeded those of the Scottish, such as the latter have been.

The following details of the history of an English Gipsy family are taken from a report on the prisons in Northumberland. The writer of this report does not appear to have been aware, however, of the family in question being Gipsies, speaking an Oriental language, and that, according to the custom of their tribe, a dexterous theft or robbery is one of the most meritorious actions they can perform.

“ Crime in Families. William Winters’ Family.

“ William himself, and one of his sons, were hanged together for murder. Another son committed an offence for which he was sent to the hulks, and, soon after his release, was concerned in a murder, for which he was hanged. Three of the daughters were convicted of various offences, and the mother was a woman of notorious bad character. The family was a terror to the neighbourhood, and, according to report, had been so for generations. The father, with a woman with whom he cohabited, (himself a married man,) was hanged for house-breaking. His first wife was a woman of very bad character, and his second wife was transported. One of the sons, a notorious thief, and two of the daughters, were hanged for murder. Mr. Blake believes that the only member of the family that turned out well was a girl, who was taken from the father when he was in prison, previous to execution, and brought up apart from her brothers and sisters. The grandfather was once in a lunatic asylum, as a madman. The father had a quarrel with one of his sons, about the sale of some property, and shot him dead. The mother co-habited with another man, and was one morning found dead, with her throat cut. One of the sons, (not already spoken of,) had a bastard child by one of his cousins, herself of weak intellect, and, being under suspicion of having destroyed the child, was arrested. While in prison, however, and before the trial came on, he destroyed himself by cutting his throat.”

This family, I believe, are the Winters noticed by Sir Walter Scott, in Blackwood’s Magazine, as follows :

“ A gang (of Gipsies), of the name of Winters, long inhabited the wastes of Northumberland, and committed many crimes ; among others, a murder upon a poor woman, with singular atrocity, for which one of them was hung in chains,

near Tonpitt, in Reedsdale. The mortal reliques having decayed, the lord of the manor has replaced them by a wooden effigy, and still maintains the gibbet. The remnant of this gang came to Scotland, about fifteen years ago, and assumed the Roxburghshire name of Wintirip, as they found their own something odious. They settled at a cottage within about four miles of Earlstoun, and became great plagues to the country, until they were secured, after a tight battle, tried before the circuit court at Jedburgh, and banished back to their native country of England. The dalesmen of Reedwater showed great reluctance to receive these returned emigrants. After the Sunday service at a little chapel near Otterbourne, one of the squires rose, and, addressing the congregation, told them they would be accounted no longer Reedsdale men, but Reedsdale women, if they permitted this marked and atrocious family to enter their district. The people answered that they would not permit them to come that way ; and the proscribed family, hearing of the unanimous resolution to oppose their passage, went more southernly, by the heads of the Tyne, and I never heard more of them, but I have little doubt they are all hanged.*

* It is but just to say that this family of Winters is, or at least was, the worst kind of English Gipsies. Their name is a by-word among the race in England. When they say, "It's a winter morning," they wish to express something very bad. It is difficult to get them to admit that the Winters belong to the tribe.—Ed.

CHAPTER III.

SCOTTISH GIPSIES, DOWN TO THE YEAR 1715.

THAT the Gipsies were in Scotland in the year 1506 is certain, as appears by a letter of James IV, of Scotland, to the King of Denmark, in favour of Anthonius Gawino, Earl of Little Egypt, a Gipsy chief. But there is a tradition, recorded in Crawford's Peerage, that a company of Gipsies, or Saracens, were committing depredations in Scotland before the death of James II, which took place in 1460, being forty-six years after the Gipsies were first observed on the continent of Europe, and it is, therefore, probable that these wanderers were encamped on Scottish ground before the year 1460, above mentioned. As I am not aware of Saracens ever having set foot in Scotland, England, or Ireland, I am disposed to think, if there is any truth in this tradition, it alludes to the Gipsies.* The story relates to the estate and family of McLellan of Bombie, in Galloway, and is as follows :

In the reign of James II, the Barony of Bombie was again recovered by the McLellans, (as the tradition goes,) after this manner : In the same reign, says our author of small credit, (Sir George McKenzie, in his baronage M.S.,) it happened that a company of Saracens or Gipsies, from Ireland,†

* There is no reason to doubt that these were Gipsies. They were evidently a roving band, from some of the continental hordes, that had passed over into Scotland, to "prospect" and plunder. They would, very naturally, be called Saracens by the natives of Scotland, to whom any black people, at that time, would appear as Saracens. We may, therefore, assume that the Gipsies have been fully four hundred years in Scotland. I may mention, however, that Mediterranean corsairs occasionally landed and plundered on the British coast, to as late a period as the reign of Charles I.—ED.

† Almost all the Scottish Gipsies assert that their ancestors came by way of Ireland into Scotland.

[This is extremely likely. On the publication of the edict of Ferdinand

infested the county of Galloway, whereupon the king intimated a proclamation, bearing, that whoever should disperse them, and bring in their captain, dead or alive, should have the Barony of Bombie for his reward. It chanced that a brave young gentleman, the laird of Bombie's son, fortunated to kill the person for which the reward was promised, and he brought his head on the point of his sword to the king, and thereupon he was immediately seized in the Barony of Bombie; and to perpetuate the memory of that brave and remarkable action, he took for his crest a Moor's head, and 'Think on' for his motto.*

As armorial bearings were generally assumed to commemorate facts and deeds of arms, it is likely that the crest of the McLellans is the head of a *Gipsy* chief. In the reign of James II, alluded to, we find "away putting of *sorners*, (forcible obtruders,) fancied fools, vagabonds, out-liers, masterful beggars, *bairds*, (strolling rhymers,) and such like runners about," is more than once enforced by acts of parliament.†

But the earliest authentic notice which has yet been discovered of the first appearance of the Gipsies in Scotland, is the letter of James IV, to the King of Denmark, in 1506. At this period these vagrants represented themselves as Egyptian pilgrims, and so far imposed on our religious and melancholy monarch, as to procure from him a favourable recommendation to his uncle of Denmark, in behalf of one of these "Earls," and his "lamentable retinue." The following is a translation of this curious epistle :

"Most illustrious, &c.—Anthonius Gawino, Earl of Little Egypt, and the other afflicted and lamentable tribe of his retinue, whilst, through a desire of travelling, and, by command of the Pope,‡ (as he says,) pilgriming, over the Christian

of Spain, in 1492, some of the Spanish Gipsies would likely pass over to the south of Ireland, and thence find their way into Scotland, before 1506. Anthonius Gawino, above referred to, would almost seem to be a Spanish name. We may, therefore, very safely assume that the Gipsies of Scotland are of Spanish Gipsy descent.—Ed.

* Crawford's Peerage, page 238.

† Glendook's Scots' acts of parliament.

‡ Mr. Hoyland makes some very judicious remarks upon the capacity of the Gipsies, when they first appeared in Europe. He says: "The first of this people who came into Europe must have been persons of discernment and discrimination, to have adapted their deceptions so exactly to the genius and habits of the different people they visited, as to ensure success in all

world, according to their custom, had lately arrived on the frontiers of our kingdom, and implored us that we, out of humanity, would allow him to approach our limits without damage, and freely carry about all things, and the company he now has. He easily obtains what the hard fortune wretched men require. Thus he has sojourned here, (as we have been informed,) for several months, in peaceable and catholic manner. King and uncle, he now proposes a voyage to Denmark to thee. But, being about to cross the ocean, he hath requested our letters, in which we would inform your Highness of these, and at the same time commend the calamity of this tribe to your royal munificence. But we believe that the fates, manners, and race of the wandering Egyptians are better known to thee than us, because Egypt is nearer thy kingdom, and a greater number of such men sojourn in thy kingdom.—Most illustrious, &c.”*

countries. The stratagem to which they had recourse, on entering France, evinces consummate artifice of plan, and not a little adroitness and dexterity in the execution. The specious appearance of submission to Papal authority, in the penance of wandering seven years, without lying in a bed, contained three distinct objects. They could not have devised an expedient more likely to recommend them to the favour of the ecclesiastics, or better concerted for taking advantage of the superstitious credulity of the people, and, at the same time, for securing to themselves the gratification of their own nomadic propensities. So complete was the deception they practised, that we find they wandered up and down France, under the eye of the magistracy, not for seven years only, but for more than a hundred years, without molestation.”

Mr. Hoyland's remarks cover only half of the question, for, being “pilgrims,” their chiefs must also assume very high titles, to give them consideration with the rulers of Europe—such as dukes, earls, lords, counts and knights. To carry out the character of pilgrims, the body would go very poorly clad; it would only be the chiefs who would be flashily accoutred. It is, therefore, by no means wonderful that the Gipsies should have succeeded so well, and so long, in obtaining an entrance, and a toleration, in every country of Europe.—*Ed.*

* *Illustrissime, &c.*—*Anthionius Gawino, ex Parva Egypto comes, et cætera ejus comitatus, gens afflicta et miseranda, dum Christianam orbem peregrinationes studio, Apostolicæ sedis, (ut refert) jussu, suorum more peregrinans, fines nostri regni dudum advenerat, atque in sortis suæ, et miseriarum hujus populi, refugium, nos pro humanitate imploraverat ut nostros limites sibi impune adire, res cunctas, et quam habet societatem libere circumagere liceret. Impetrat facile quæ postulat miserorum hominum dura fortuna. Ita aliquot menses bene et catholice, (sic accepimus,) hic versatus, ad te, Rex et avuncule, in Daciam transitum paret. Sed oceanum transmissurus nostras literas exoravit; quibus celsitudinem tuam horum certiorum redderemus, simul et calamitatem ejus gentis Regiæ tuæ munificentiae commendaremus. Ceterum errabundæ Egypti fata, moresque, et genus, eo tibi quam nobis credimus notiora, quo Egyptus tuo regno*

From 1506 to 1540, the 28th of the reign of James V, we find that the true character of the Gipsies had not reached the Scottish court; for, in 1540, the king of Scotland entered into a league or treaty with "John Faw, Lord and Earl of Little Egypt;" and a writ passed the Privy Seal, the same year, in favour of this Prince or *Rajah* of the Gipsies. As the public edicts in favour of this race are extremely rare, I trust a copy of this curious document, in this place, may not be unacceptable to the reader.*

"James, by the grace of God, King of Scots: To our sheriffs of Edinburgh, principal and within the constabulary of Haddington, Berwick, Roxburgh, &c., &c.; provosts, aldermen, and baillies of our burghs and cities of Edinburgh, &c., &c., greeting: Forasmuch as it is humbly meant and shown to us, by our loved John Faw, Lord and Earl of Little Egypt, that whereas he obtained our letter under our great seal, direct you all and sundry our said sheriffs, stewarts, baillies, provosts, aldermen, and baillies of burghs, and to all and sundry others having authority within our realm, to assist him in execution of justice upon his company and folk, conform to the laws of Egypt, and in punishing of all them that rebel against him: nevertheless, as we are informed, Sebastiane Lalow Egyptian, one of the said John's company, with his accomplices and partakers under written, that is to say, Anteane Donea, Satona Fingo, Nona Finco, Phillip Hatseyggaw, Towla Bailyow, Grasta Neyn, Geleyr Bailyow, Bernard Beige, Demeo Matskalla (or Macskalla), Notfaw Lawlowr, Martyn Femine, rebels and conspirators against the said John Faw, and have removed them all utterly out of his company, and taken from him divers sums of money, jewels, clothes and other goods, to the quantity of a great sum of money; and on nowise will pass home with him, howbeit he has bidden and remained of long time upon them, and is bound and obliged to bring home with him all them of his company that are alive, and a testimony of them that are dead: and as the said John has the said

vicinior, et major hujusmodi hominum frequentia tuo diversatur imperio. Illustrissime, &c.

* I have taken the liberty of translating the various extracts from the Scottish acts of parliament, quoted in this chapter, as the original language is not very intelligible to English or even Scottish readers. For doing this, I may be denounced as a Vandal by the ultra Scotch, for so treating such "rich old Doric," as the language of the period may be termed.—Ed.

Sebastiane's obligation, made in Dunfermline before our master household, that he and his company should remain with him, and on nowise depart from him, as the same bears : In contrary to the tenor of which, the said Sebastiane, by sinister and wrong information, false relation, circumvention of us, has purchased our writings, discharging him and the remnant of the persons above written, his accomplices and partakers of the said John's company, and with his goods taken by them from him ; causes certain our lieges assist them and their opinions, and to fortify and take their part against the said John, their lord and master ; so that he on nowise can apprehend nor get them, to have them home again within their own country, after the tenor of his said bond, to his heavy damage and *skaith* (hurt), and in great peril of losing his heritage, and expressly against justice : Our will is, therefore, and we charge you straightly and command that ye and every one of you within the bounds of your offices, command and charge all our lieges, that none of them take upon hand to reset, assist, fortify, supply, maintain, defend, or take part with the said Sebastiane and his accomplices above written, for no body's nor other way, against the said John Faw, their lord and master ; but that they and ye, in likewise, take and lay hands upon them wherever they may be apprehended, and bring them to him, to be punished for their demerits, conform to his laws ; and help and fortify him to punish and do justice upon them for their trespasses ; and to that effect lend him your prisons, stocks, fetters, and all other things necessary thereto, as ye and each of you, and all other our lieges, will answer to us thereupon, and under all highest pain and charge that after may follow : So that the said John have no cause of complaint thereupon in time coming, nor to resort again to us to that effect, notwithstanding any our writings, sinisterly purchased or to be purchased, by the said Sebastiane on the contrary : And also charge all our lieges that none of them molest, vex, unquiet, or trouble the said John Faw and his company, in doing their lawful business, or otherwise, within our realm, and in their passing, remaining, or away-going forth of the same, under the pain above written : And such-like that ye command and charge all skippers, masters and mariners of all ships within our realm, at all ports and havens where the said John and his

company shall happen to resort and come, to receive him and them therein, upon their expenses, for furthering of them forth of our realm to the parts beyond sea, as you and each of them such-like will answer to us thereupon, and under the pain aforesaid. Subscribed with our hand, and under our privy seal at Falkland, the fifteenth day of February, and of our reign the 28th year."*

* Ex. Registro Secreti Sigilli, Vol. XIV, fol. 59. Blackwood. Appendix to McLaurin's Criminal Trials.

This document may well be termed the most curious and important record of the early history of the Gipsy race in Europe; and it is well worthy of consideration. The meaning of it is simply this: John Faw had evidently been importuned by the Scottish Court, (at which he appears to have been a man of no small consequence,) to bring his so-called "pilgrimage," which he had undertaken "by command of the Pope," to an end, so far, at least, as remaining in Scotland was concerned. Being pressed upon the point, he evidently, as a last resource, formed a plan with Sebastian Lalow, and the other "rebels," to leave him, and carry off, (as he said,) his property. To give the action an air of importance, and make it appear as a real rebellion, they brought the question into court. Then, John could turn round, and reply to the king: "May it please your majesty! I can't return to my own country. My company and folk have conspired, rebelled, robbed, and left me. I can't lay my hands upon them; I don't even know where to find them. I must take them home with me, or a testimony of them that are dead, under the great peril of losing my heritage, at the hands of my lord, the Duke of Egypt. However, if your majesty will help me to catch them, I will not be long in taking leave of *your* kingdom, with all my company. In the meantime, your majesty will be pleased to issue your commands to all the shipowners and mariners in the kingdom, to be ready, *when I gather together my folk (!)* to further our passage to Egypt, for which I will pay them handsomely." The whole business may be termed a piece of "thimble-rigging," to prolong their stay—that is, enable them to remain permanently—in the country. Our author, I think, is quite in error in supposing this to have been a real quarrel among the Gipsies. If it had been a real quarrel, the Gipsies would soon have settled the question among themselves, by their own laws; it would have been the last thing, under all the circumstances of the case, they would have thought of, to have brought it before the Scottish court. The Gipsies, according to Grellmann, assigned the following reason for prolonging their stay in Europe: "They endeavoured to prolong the term (of their pilgrimage) by asserting that their return home was prevented by soldiers, stationed to intercept them; and by wishing to have it believed that new parties of pilgrims were to leave their country every year, otherwise their land would be rendered totally barren."

The quarrel between the Faas and the Baillies, for the *Gipsy crown*, in after times, did not, in all probability, arise from this business, but most likely, as the English Gipsies believe, from some marriage between these families. The Scottish Gipsies, like the two Roses, have had, and for aught I know to the contrary, may have yet, two rival kings—Faa and Baillie, with their partisans—although the Faas, from the prominent position which they have always occupied in Scottish history, have been the only kings known to the Scottish public generally.

This curious league of John Faw with the Scottish king, who acknowledges the laws and customs of the Gipsies within his kingdom, was of very short duration. Like that of many other favourites of princes, the credit which the "Earl of Little Egypt" possessed at court was, the succeeding year, completely annihilated, and that with a vengeance, as will appear by the following order in council. The Gipsies, quarrelling among themselves, and publicly bringing their matters of dispute before the government, had, perhaps, contributed to produce an enquiry into the real character and conduct of these foreigners; verifying the ancient adage, that a house divided against itself cannot stand. But the immediate cause assigned for the sudden change of mind in the king, so unfortunate for the Gipsies, is handed down to us in the following tradition, current in Fife:

King James V, as he was travelling through part of his dominions, disguised under the character of the Gaberlunzie-man, or Guid-man of Ballangiegh, prosecuting, as was his custom, his low and vague amours, fell in with a band of Gipsies, in the midst of their carousals, in a cave, near Wemyss, in Fifeshire. His majesty heartily joined in their revels, but it was not long before a scuffle ensued, wherein the king was very roughly handled, being in danger of his life.* The Gipsies, perceiving at last that he was none of their people, and considering him a spy, treated him with great indignity. Among other humiliating insults, they compelled his royal majesty, as an humble servant of a Tinkler, to carry their budgets and wallets on his back, for several miles, until he was exhausted; and being unable to

In perusing this work, the reader will be pleased to take the above mentioned document as the starting point of the history of the Gipsies in Scotland; and consider the Gipsies of that time as the progenitors of all those at present in Scotland, including the great increase of the body, by the mixture of the white blood that has been brought within their community. He will also be pleased to divest himself of the childish prejudices, acquired in the nursery and in general literature, against the name of Gipsy; and consider that there are people in Scotland, occupying some of the highest positions in life, who are Gipsies; not indeed Gipsies in point of purity of blood, but people who have Gipsy blood in their veins, and who hold themselves to be Gipsies, in the manner which I have, to a certain extent, explained in the Preface, and will more fully illustrate in my Disquisition on the Gipsies.—ED.

* The Gipsies assert that, on this occasion, the king attempted to take liberties with one of their women; and that one of the male Gipsies "came crack over his head with a bottle."—ED.

proceed a step further, he sank under his load. He was then dismissed with scorn and contempt by the merciless Gipsies. Being exasperated at their cruel and contemptuous treatment of his sacred person, and having seen a fair specimen of their licentious manner of life, the king caused an order in council immediately to be issued, declaring that, if *three* Gipsies were found together, one of the three was instantly to be seized, and forthwith hanged or shot, by any one of his majesty's subjects that chose to put the order in execution.

This tradition is noticed by the Rev. Andrew Small, in his antiquities of Fife, in the following words. His book came into my hands after I had written down my account of the tradition.

"But, surely, this would be the last tinker that ever he would dub (a knight). If we may judge from what happened, one might imagine he, (James V,) would be heartily sick of them, (tinkers,) being taken prisoner by three of them, and compelled to stay with them several days, so that his nobles lost all trace of him, and being also forced, not only to lead their ass, but likewise to assist it in carrying part of the panniers! At length he got an opportunity, when they were bousing in a house at the east end of the village of Milnathort, where there is now a new meeting-house built, when he was left on the green with the ass. He contrived to write, some way, on a slip of paper, and gave a boy half-a-crown to run with it to Falkland, and give it to his nobles, intimating that the guid-man of Ballangiegh was in a state of captivity. After they got it, and knew where he was, they were not long in being with him, although it was fully ten miles they had to ride. Whenever he got assistance, he caused two of the tinkers, that were most harsh and severe to him, to be hanged immediately, and let the third one, that was most favourable to him, go free. They were hanged a little south-west of the village, at a place which, from the circumstance, is called the Gallow-hill to this day. The two skeletons were lately found after the division of the commonty that recently took place. He also, after this time, made a law, that whenever three tinkers, or Gipsies, were found going together, two of them should be hanged, and the third set at liberty."*

* Small's Roman Antiquities of Fife, pages 285 and 286. Small also records a song composed on James V dubbing a Tinker a knight.

The following order in council is, perhaps, the one to which this tradition alludes :

"Act of the lords of council respecting John Faw, &c., June 6, 1541. The which day anent the complaint given by John Faw and his brother, and Sebastian Lalow, Egyptians, to the King's grace, ilk ane plenizeand . . . upon other and divers faults and injuries ; and that it is agreed among them to pass home, and have the same decided before the Duke of Egypt.* The lords of council, being advised with the points of the said complaints, and understanding perfectly the great thefts and *skaiths* (hurts) done by the said Egyptians upon our sovereign lord's lieges, wherever they come or resort, ordain letters to be directed to the provosts and baillies of Edinburgh, St. Johnstown (Perth), Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Elgin, Forres, and Inverness ; and to the sheriffs of Edinburgh, Fife, Perth, Forfar, Kincardine, Aberdeen, Elgin and Forres, Banff, Cromarty, Inverness, and all other sheriffs, stewarts, provosts and baillies, where it happens the said Egyptians to resort.† To command and charge them, by open proclamation, at the market crosses of the head burghs of the sheriffdoms, to depart forth of this realm, with their wives, children, and companies, within xxx days after they be charged thereto, under the pain of death ; notwithstanding any other letters or privileges granted to them by the king's grace, because his grace, with the advice of the lords, has discharged the same for the causes aforesaid : with certification that if they be found in this realm, the said xxx days being past, they shall be taken and put to death."‡

This sharp order in council seems to have been the first edict banishing the Gipsies as a whole people—men, women,

* It would seem that John Faw had become frightened at the mishap of one of his folk "coming crack over the king's head with a bottle." and that, to pacify his majesty, he had at once gone before him, and informed him that he had prevailed on his "rebellious subjects" to *pass home*, and have the matter in dispute decided by the *Duke of Egypt*. This would, so far, satisfy the king ; but to make sure of getting rid of his troublesome visitors, he issued his commands to the various authorities to see that they really did leave the country.—Ed.

† It would appear, from the mention that is made here of the authorities of so many towns and counties, "where it happens the said Egyptians to resort," that the race was scattered over all Scotland at this time, and that it must have been numerous.—Ed.

‡ M. S. Act. Dom. Con. vol. 15, fol. 155.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

and children—from Scotland. But the king, whom, according to tradition, they had personally so deeply offended, dying in the following year, (1542) a new reign brought new prospects to the denounced wanderers.* They seem to have had the address to recover their credit with the succeeding government; for, in 1553, the writ which passed the privy seal in 1540, forming a sort of league with "John Faw, Lord and Earl of Little Egypt," was renewed by Hamilton, Earl of Arran, then Regent during the minority of Queen Mary. McLaurin, in his criminal trials, when speaking of John Faw, gravely calls him "this peer." "There is a writ," says he, "of the same tenor in favour of this peer from Queen Mary, same record, 25 April, 1553; and 8 April, 1554, he gets remission for the slaughter of Ninian Small." In Blackwood's Magazine it is mentioned that "Andro Faw, Captain of the Egyptians,† and twelve of his gang specified by name, obtained a remission for the slaughter of Ninian Small, committed within the town of Linton, in the month of March last by past upon suddenly." This appears to be the slaughter to which McLaurin alludes. The following are the names of these thirteen Gipsies: "Andro Faw, captain of the Egyptians, George Faw, Robert Faw, and Anthony Faw, his sons, Johnne Faw, Andrew George Nichoah, George Sebastian Colyne, George Colyne, Julie Colyne, Johnne Colyne, James Haw, Johnne Browne, and George Browne, Egyptians."

From the edict above mentioned, it is evident that the Gipsies in Scotland, at that time, were allowed to punish the criminal members of their own tribe, according to their own

* It is perfectly evident that the severe decree of James V against the Gipsies arose from the personal insult alluded to, owing to the circumstance of its falling to the ground after his death, and the Gipsies recovering their position with his successor. Apart from what the Gipsies themselves say on this subject, the ordinary tradition may be assumed to be well founded. If the Gipsies were spoken to on the subject of the insult offered to the king, they would naturally reply, that they did not know, from his having been dressed like a beggar, that it was the king; an excuse which the court, knowing his majesty's vagabond habits, would probably receive. But it is very likely that John Faw would declare that the guilty parties were those rebels whom he was desirous to catch, and take home with him to Egypt! This Gipsy king seems to have been a master of diplomacy.—Ed.

† The Gipsy chiefs were partial to the title of Captain; arising, I suppose, from their being leaders of large bands of young men employed in theft and robbery. [In Spain, such Gipsy chiefs, according to Mr. Borrow, assumed the name of Counts.—Ed.]

peculiar laws, customs and usages, without molestation. And it cannot be supposed that the ministers of three or four succeeding monarchs would have suffered their sovereigns to be so much imposed on, as to allow them to put their names to public documents, styling poor and miserable wretches, as we at the present day imagine them to have been, "Lords and Earls of Little Egypt." Judging from the accounts which tradition has handed down to us, of the gay and fashionable appearance of the principal Gipsies, as late as about the beginning of the eighteenth century, as will be seen in my account of the Tweed-dale bands, I am disposed to believe that Anthonius Gawino, in 1506, and John Faw, in 1540, would personally, as individuals, that is, as Gipsy Rajahs,* have a very respectable and imposing appearance in the eyes of the officers of the crown. And besides, John Faw appears to have been possessed of "divers sums of money, jewels, clothes and other goods, to the quantity of a great sum of money;" and it would seem that some of the officers of high rank in the household of our kings had fingered the cash of the Gipsy pilgrims. If there is any truth in the popular and uniform tradition that, in the seventeenth century, a Countess of Cassilis was seduced from her duty to her lord, and carried off by a Gipsy, of the name of John Faa, and his band, it cannot be imagined, that the seducer would be a poor, wretched, beggarly Tinkler, such as many of the tribe are at this day. If a handsome person, elegant apparel, a lively disposition, much mirth and glee, and a constant boasting of extraordinary prowess, would in any way contribute to make an impression on the heart of the frail countess, these qualities, I am disposed to think, would not be wanting in the "Gipsy Laddie." And, moreover, John Faw bore, on paper at least, as high a title as her husband, Lord Cassilis, from whom she absconded. It is said the individual who seduced the fair lady was a Sir John Faw, of Dunbar, her former sweetheart, and not a Gipsy; but tradition gives no account of a Sir John Faw, of Dunbar.† The Falls, merchants, at Dunbar, were descended from the Gipsy Faas of Yetholm.

* *Rajah*—The Scottish Gipsy word for a chief, governor, or prince.

† The author, (Mr. Finlay,) who claims a Sir John Faw, of Dunbar, to have been the person who carried off the Countess of Cassilis, gives no authority, as a writer in Blackwood says, in support of his assertion. Nor does he account for a person of that name being any other than a Gipsy.

It is pretty clear that the Gipsies remained in Scotland, with little molestation, from 1506 till 1579—the year in which James VI took the government into his own hands, being a period of about seventy-three years, during which time these wanderers roamed up and down the kingdom, without receiving any check of consequence, excepting the short period—probably about one year—in which the severe order of James V remained in force, and which, in all probability, expired with the king.*

The civil and religious contests in which the nation had been long engaged, particularly during the reign of Queen Mary, produced numerous swarms of banditti, who committed outrages in every part of the country. The slighter depredations of the Gipsy bands, in the midst of the fierce and bloody quarrels of the different factions that generally prevailed throughout the kingdom, would attract but little attention, and the Gipsies would thereby escape the punishment which their actions merited. But the government being more firmly established, by the union of the different parties who distracted the country, and the king assuming the supreme authority, which all acknowledged, vigorous measures were adopted for suppressing the excess of strolling vagabonds of every description. In the very year the king was placed at the head of affairs, a law was passed, “For punishment of strong and idle beggars, and relief of the poor and impotent.”

Against the Gipsies this sweeping statute is particularly directed, for they are named, and some of their practices pointed out, in the following passage: “And that it may be

Indeed, this is but an instance of the ignorance and prejudice of people generally in regard to the Gipsies. The tradition of the hero being a Gipsy, I have met with among the English Gipsies, who even gave me the name of the lady. John Faw, in all probability the king of the Gipsies, who carried off the countess, might reasonably be assumed to have been, in point of education, on a par with her, who, in that respect, would not, in all probability, rise above the most humble Scotch cow-milker at the present day, whatever her personal bearing might have been.—*Ed.*

* During these seventy-three years of peace, the Gipsies in Scotland must have multiplied prodigiously, and, in all probability, drawn much of the native blood into their body. Not being, at that time, a proscribed race, but, on the contrary, honoured by leagues and covenants with the king himself, the ignorant public generally would have few of those objections to intermarry with them, which they have had in subsequent times. The thieving habits of the Gipsies would prove no bar to such connections, as the Scottish people were accustomed to thieving of all kinds.—*Ed.*

known what manner of persons are meant to be strong and idle beggars and vagabonds, and worthy of the punishment before specified, it is declared that all idle persons going about the country of this realm, using subtle, crafty and unlawful plays—as jugglery, fast-and-loose, and such others, the idle people calling themselves Egyptians, or any other that fancy themselves to have knowledge of prophecy, charming, or other abused sciences, whereby they persuade the people that they can tell their weirds, deaths, and fortunes, and such other fantastical imaginations.”* And the following is the mode prescribed for punishing the Gipsies, and the other offenders associated with them in this act of parliament: “That such as make themselves fools and are *bairds*, (strolling rhymers,) or other such like runners about, being apprehended, shall be put in the king’s ward, or irons, so long as they have any goods of their own to live on, and if they have not whereupon to live of their own, that their ears be nailed to the tron or other tree, and cut off, and (themselves) banished the country; and if thereafter they be found again, that they be hanged.”†

This statute was ratified and confirmed in the 12th parliament of James VI, cap. 147, 5th June, 1592, wherein the incorrigible Gipsies are again referred to: “And for the better trial of common *sorners* (forcible obtruders,) vagabonds, and masterful beggars, fancied fools, and counterfeit Egyptians, and to the effect that they may be still preserved till they be compelled to settle at some certain dwelling, or be expelled forth of the country, &c.” The next law in which the Gipsies are mentioned, with other vagabonds, was passed in the 15th parliament of the same reign, 19th December, 1597, entitled, “Strong beggars, vagabonds, and Egyptians should be punished.” The statute itself reads as follows: “Our sovereign lord and estates of parliament ratify and approve the acts of parliament

* In this act of parliament are denounced, along with the Gipsies, “all minstrels, songsters, and tale-tellers, not avowed by special licence of some of the lords of parliament or great barons, or by the high burghs and cities, for their common minstrels.” “All *vagabond scholars* (!) of the universities of St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, not licenced by the rector and dean of faculty to *ask alms*.” It would seem, from this last extract, that the Scottish Universities granted diplomas to their students to beg! The Gipsies were associated or classed with good company at this time. But beggar students, or student-beggars, were common in other parts of Europe during that age.—ED.

† Glendook’s Scots Acts, James VI, 6th Par. cap. 74—20th Oct. 1579.

made before, against strong and idle beggars, vagabonds, and Egyptians," with this addition : " That strong beggars and their children be employed in common works, and their service mentioned in the said act of parliament, in the year of God, 1579, to be prorogate in during their life times, &c."*

All the foregoing laws were again ratified and enforced by another act, in the same reign, 15th November, 1600. The following extract will serve to give some explanation how these statutes were neglected, and seldom put in force : " And how the said acts have received little or no effect or execution, by the oversight and negligence of the persons who were nominated justices and commissioners, for putting of the said acts to full and due execution, so that the strong and idle beggars, being for the most part thieves, *bairds*, (strolling rhymers,) and counterfeit *lammers*, (scoundrels,) living most insolently and ungodly, without marriage or baptism, are suffered to *vaig* and wander throughout the whole country."† " But," says Baron Hume, " all ordinary means having proved insufficient to restrain so numerous and so sturdy a crew, the privy council at length, in June, 1603, were induced to venture on the more effectual expedient, (recommended by the example of some other realm,) of at once ordering the whole race to leave the kingdom by a certain day, and never to return under the pain of death.‡ A few years after, this proclamation was converted into per-

* By the above, and subsequent statutes, in the reign of James VI, " Coal and salt-masters might apprehend, and put to labour, all vagabonds and sturdy beggars." The truth is, these kidnapped individuals and their children were made slaves of to these masters. The colliers were emancipated only within these fifty years. It has been stated to me that some of the colliers in the Lothians are of Gipsy extraction. [Our author might have said *Gipsies*; for being " of Gipsy extraction," and " *Gipsies*," are expressions quite synonymous, notwithstanding the application by the public of the latter term to the more original kind of Gipsies only.—Ed.]

† If Fletcher of Saltoun be correct, when he states that, in his time, which was about the end of the 17th century, there were two hundred thousand people, (about one-fifth of the whole population,) begging from door to door in Scotland, it would be a task of no little difficulty, for those in power, to put in force the laws against the Gipsies, and vagabonds generally. The editor of Dr. Pennicuik's history of Tweed-dale, thinks Fletcher's is an over-charged picture. Some are of opinion that, when he made his statement, he included the greater part of the inhabitants of the Scottish Border, and also those in the north of Scotland; for, he said, the Highlands " was an inexhaustible source of beggars," and wished these banditti transplanted to the low country, and to people the Highlands from hence.

‡ The records in which this order is contained are lost.

petual law, by statute 1609, cap. 13, with this farther convenient, but very severe, provision toward the more effectual execution of the order, that it should be lawful to condemn and execute them to the death, upon proof made of the single fact 'that they are called, known, repute and holden Egyptians'!" As this is the only statute exclusively relating to, and denouncing, the Gipsies, I shall give it at length.

"13. Act anent the Egyptians. Our sovereign lord and estates of parliament ratify, approve, and perpetually confirm the act of secret council, made in the month of June or thereby, 1603 years, and proclamation following thereupon, commanding the vagabonds, *sorners* (forcible obtruders), and common thieves, commonly called Egyptians, to pass forth of this kingdom, and remain perpetually forth thereof, and never to return within the same, under pain of death; and that the same have force and execution after the first day of August next to come. After the which time, if any of the said vagabonds, called Egyptians, as well women as men, shall be found within this kingdom, or any part thereof, it shall be lawful to all his majesty's good subjects, or any one of them, to cause take, apprehend, imprison, and execute to death the said Egyptians, either men or women, as common, notorious, and condemned thieves, by one assize only to be tried, that they are called, known, repute and holden Egyptians: In the which cause, whosoever of the assize happen to *clenge* (exculpate) any of the aforesaid Egyptians pannelled, as said is, shall be pursued, handled and censured as committers of wilful error: And whoever shall, any time thereafter, reset, receive, supply, or entertain any of the said Egyptians, either men or women, shall lose their escheat, and be warded at the judge's will: And that the sheriffs and magistrates, in whose bounds they shall publicly and avowedly resort and remain, be called before the lords of his highness' secret council, and severely censured and punished for their negligence in execution of this act: Discharging all letters, protections, and warrants whatsoever, purchased by the said Egyptians, or any of them, from his majesty or lords of secret council, for their remaining within this realm, as surreptitiously and deceitfully obtained by their knowledge: Annulling also all warrants purchased, or hereafter to be purchased, by any subject of whatsoever rank within this kingdom, for their reset, entertaining, or

doing any manner of favour to the said Egyptians, at any time after the said first day of August next to come, for now and ever.”* In a subsequent enactment, in 1617, appointing justices of the peace and constables, the destruction of the proscribed Egyptians is particularly enjoined, in defining the different duties of the magistrates and their peace officers.†

But so little respected was the authority of the government, that in 1612, three years after the passing of the Gipsy act, his majesty was under the humiliating necessity of entering into a contract with the clan Scott, and their friends, by which the clan bound themselves “to give up all bands of friendship, kindness, oversight, maintenance or assurance, if any we have, with common thieves and broken clans, &c.” It is certain there would be many bonds of the same nature with other turbulent clans throughout the kingdom. That Scotchmen of respectability and influence protected the Gipsies, and afforded them shelter on their lands, after the promulgation of the cruel statute of 1609, is manifest from the following passages, which I extract from Blackwood’s Magazine, for 1817; the conductor of which seems to have been careful in examining the public records for the documents quoted by him; having been guided in his researches, I believe, by Sir Walter Scott.

“In February, 1615, we find a remission under the privy seal, granted to William Auchterlony, of Cayrine, for resetting of John Faw and his followers.‡ On the 14th July, 1616, the sheriff of Forfar is severely reprimanded for delaying to execute some Gipsies, who had been taken within his jurisdiction, and for troubling the council with petitions in their behalf. In November following appears a proclamation against Egyptians and their resettlers. In December, 1619, we find another proclamation against resettlers of them;

* Glendook’s Scots Act.

† Ib.

‡ The nature of this crime in Scotch law is fully explained in the following extract from the original, which also appears curious in other respects. The pardon is granted “pro receptione, supportatione, et detentione supra terra suas de Belmadie, et infra eius habitationis domum, aliaq. edificia eiusdem, *Joannis Fall, Ethiopis, lie Egyptian*, eiusq. uxoris, puerorum, servorum et associatorum; Neenon pro ministrando ipsis cibum, potum, pecunias, hospicium, aliaq. necessaria, quocunq. tempore vel occasione preterita, contra acta nostri Parlamenti vel secreti concilii, vel contra quecunq. leges, alia acta, aut constitutiones huius nostri regni Scotiæ in contrarium facta. Regist. secreti sigilli vol. lxxxiii, fol. 291, *Blackwood’s Magazine*.—Ed.

in April, 1620, another proclamation of the same kind, and in July, 1620, a commission against resettlers, all with very severe penalties. The nature of these acts will be better understood from the following extract from that of the 4th July, 1616, which also very well explains the way in which the Gipsies contrived to maintain their footing in the country, in defiance of all the efforts of the legislature to extirpate them." "It is of truth that the thieves and *limmers* (scoundrels), aforesaid, having for some short space after the said act of parliament, (1609,) . . . dispersed themselves in certain secret and obscure places of the country. . . they were not known to wander abroad in troops and companies, according to their accustomed manner, yet, shortly thereafter, finding that the said act of parliament was neglected, and that no enquiry nor . . . was made for them, they began to take new breath and courage, and . . . unite themselves in infamous companies and societies, under . . . commanders, and continually since then have remained within the country, committing as well open and avowed *rieffis* (robberies) in all parts . . . murders, . . . *pleine stouthe* (common theft,) and pickery, where they may not be mastered; and they do shamefully and mischievously abuse the simple and ignorant people, by telling fortunes, and using charms, and a number of juggling tricks and falseties, unworthy to be heard of in a country subject to religion, law, and justice; and they are encouraged to remain within the country, and to continue in their thievish and juggling tricks and falseties, not only through default of the execution of the said act of parliament, but, what is worse, that great numbers of his majesty's subjects, of whom some outwardly pretend to be famous and unspotted gentlemen, have given and give open and avowed protection, reset, supply and maintainance, upon their grounds and lands, to the said vagabonds, *sorners*, (forcible obtruders,) and condemned thieves and *limmers*, (scoundrels,) and suffer them to remain days, weeks, and months together thereupon, without controulment, and with connivance and oversight, &c." "So they do leave a foul, infamous, and ignominious spot upon them, their houses, and posterity, that they are patrons to thieves and *limmers*, (scoundrels,)" &c.*

* The same state of things existed in Spain. Charles II, passed a law on the 12th June, 1695, the 16th article of which, as given by Mr. Borrow,

From their first arrival in the country till 1579, the Gipsies, as already mentioned, appear to have been treated as a separate people, observing their own laws and customs. In the year 1587, such was the state of society in Scotland, that laws were passed by James VI, compelling all the baronial proprietors of lands, chiefs and captains of clans, on the Borders and Highlands of Scotland, to find pledges and securities for the peaceable conduct of their retainers, tenants, clansmen, and other inhabitants of their respective estates and districts.* In the same parliament another act was passed, allowing vagabonds and broken and unpledged men to produce pledges and securities for their good conduct. The Gipsies, under these statutes, would remain unmolested, as they would readily find protection by becoming, nominally, clansmen, and assuming the surnames, of those chieftains and noblemen who were willing and able to afford them protection.† Indeed, the act allowing vagabonds to find sureties would include the Gipsy bands, for, about this

enacts: "And because we understand that the continuance of those who are called Gitanos has depended on the favour, protection, and assistance which they have experienced from persons of *different stations*, we do ordain that whosoever against whom shall be proved the fact of having, since the day of the publication hereof, favoured, received, or assisted the said Gitanos, in any manner whatever, whether *within their houses* or without, *provided he is a noble*, shall be subjected to the fine of *six thousand ducats*, and if a *plebeian*, to a *punishment of ten years in the galleys*" Such an enactment would surely prove that the Gipsies in Spain were greatly favoured by the Spanish people generally, even two centuries after they entered the country.

The causes to which may be attributed this toleration, even encouragement, of the Gipsies, are various. Among these may be mentioned a fear of consequences to person and property, tinkering, trafficking and amusement, and corruption on the part of those in power. But in the character of the Gipsies itself may be found a general cause for their escaping the effects of the laws passed against them, viz., *wheeling*. The term Gitano has been variously modified in the Spanish language, thus:

Gitano, *Gipsy, flatterer*; Gitanillo, *a little Gipsy*; Gitanismo, *the Gipsy tribe*; Gitanesco, *Gipsy-like*; Gitanear, *to flatter, entice*; Gitaneria, *wheeling, flattery*; Gitanamente, *in a sly, winning manner*; Gitanada, *blandishment, wheeling, flattery*.—Ed.

* There were 17 clans on the Borders, and 34 clans in the Highlands, who appear to have had chiefs and captains over them. There were 22 baronial proprietors connected with the Borders, and 106 connected with the Highlands, named in a roll, who were likewise ordered to find pledges. —*Glendook's Scots Acts*.

† It sometimes happened, when an internal quarrel took place in a clan, portions of the tribe left their chief, and united themselves to another, whose name they assumed, and dropped their original one.

period, they seem to have been only classed with our own native vagabonds, moss-troopers, Border and Highland thieves, broken clans and masterless men. It appears by the act of 1609, that the Gipsies had even purchased their protection from the government. The inhabitants of Scotland being at this period still divided into clans, would greatly facilitate the escape of the Gipsies from the laws passed against them. The clans on the Borders and Highlands were in a state of almost constant warfare with one another; and frequently several of the clans were united in opposition to the regular government of the country, to whose mandates they paid little or no regard. The Gipsies had no settled residence, but roamed from place to place over the whole country; and when they found themselves in danger in one place, they had no more to do but remove into the district inhabited by a hostile clan, where they would immediately find protection. Besides, the Borderers and Highlanders, themselves plunderers and thieves, would not be very active in apprehending their brother thieves, the Gipsies. Even, according to Holinshed, "the poison of theft and robbery pervaded almost all classes of the Scottish community about this period."

The excessive severity of the sanguinary statute of 1609, and the unrelenting manner in which it was often carried into effect, were calculated to produce a great outward change on the Scottish Gipsies. Like stags selected from a herd of deer, and doomed to be hunted down by dogs, these wanderers were now singled out, and separated from the community, as objects to whom no mercy was to be shown.* The word Egyptian would never be allowed to escape their lips; not a syllable of their peculiar speech would be uttered, unless in the midst of their own tribe. It is also highly probable that every part of their dress by which their fraternity could be recognized, would be carefully discontinued. To deceive the public, they would also conform *externally* to some of the religious rites, ceremonies, observances, and

* The reader will see that the Gipsies, at this time, were not greater "vagabonds" than great numbers of native Scotch, if as great. But, being strangers in the country, sojourners according to their own account, the king would naturally enough banish them, as they seem always to have been saying that they were about leaving for "their own country." Their living in tents, a mode of life so different from that of the natives, would, of itself, make them obnoxious to the king personally.—Ed.

other customs of the natives of Scotland. I am further inclined to think that it would be about this period, and chiefly in consequence of these bloody enactments, the Gipsies would, in general, assume the ordinary christian and surnames common at that time in Scotland. And their usual sagacity pointed out to them the advantages arising from taking the cognomens of the most powerful families in the kingdom, whose influence would afford them ample protection, as adopted members of their respective clans. In support of my opinion of the origin of the surnames of the Gipsies of the present day, we find that the most prevailing names among them are those of the most influential of our noble families of Scotland; such as Stewart, Gordon, Douglas, Graham, Ruthven, Hamilton, Drummond, Kennedy, Cunningham, Montgomery, Kerr, Campbell, Maxwell, Johnstone, Ogilvie, McDonald, Robertson, Grant, Baillie, Shaw, Burnet, Brown, Keith, &c.* If, even at the present day, you enquire at the Gipsies respecting their descent, the greater part of them will tell you that they are sprung from a bastard son of this or that noble family, or other person of rank and influence, of their own surname.† This pretended connexion with families of high rank and power has saved some of the tribe from the gallows even in our own time. The names, however, of the two principal families, Faw, (now Faa,) and Bailyow, (now Baillie,) appear not to have been changed since the date of the order in council or league with James V, in the year 1540, as both of these names are inserted in that document.

Baron Hume, on the criminal law of Scotland, gives the

* The English Gipsies say that native names were assumed by their race in consequence of the proscription to which it was subjected. German Gipsies, on arrival in America, change, at least modify, their names. There are many of them who go under the names of Smith, Miller, and Waggoner. Jews frequently bear names common to the natives of the countries in which they are to be found, and sometimes, at the present day, assume Christian ones. I knew two German Jews, of the name of Cohen, who settled in Scotland. One of them, who was a priest, retained the original name; but the other, who was a watchmaker, assumed the name of Cowan, which, singularly enough, the priest said, was a corruption of Cohen.—Ed.

† It is stated by Paget, in his *Travels in Hungary*, that the Gipsies in that country have a profound regard for aristocracy; and that they invariably follow that class in the matter of religious opinions. Grellmann says as much in regard to the Gipsy's desire of getting hold of a distinguished old coat to put on his person.—Ed.

following account of some of the trials and executions of the Gipsies :

"The statute (1609) annuls at the same time all protection and warrants purchased by the Egyptians from his majesty's privy council, for their remaining within the realm ; as also all privileges purchased by any person to reset, entertain, or do them any favour. It appears, indeed, from a paper in the appendix to McLaurin's Cases, that even the king's servants and great officers had not kept their hands entirely pure of this sort of treaty with the Egyptian chiefs, from whom some supply of money might in this way be occasionally obtained.

"The first Gipsies that were brought to trial on the statute, were four persons of the name of Faa, who, on the 31st July, 1611, were sentenced to be hanged. They had pleaded upon a special license from the privy council, to abide within the country ; but this appearing to be clogged with a condition of finding surety for their appearance when called on, and their surety being actually at the horn, for failure to present themselves, they were held to have infringed the terms of their protection.

"The next trial was on the 19th and 24th July, 1616, in the case of other two Faas and a Baillie, (which seem to have been noted names among the Gipsies ;) and here was started that plea which has since been repeated in almost every case, but has always been overruled, viz : that the act and proclamation were temporary ordinances, and applicable only to such Egyptians as were in the country at their date. These pannels, upon conviction, were ordered by the privy council to find caution to the extent of 1,000 merks, to leave Scotland and never to return ; and having failed to comply with this injunction, they were in consequence condemned to die.

"In January, 1624, follows a still more severe example ; no fewer than eight men, among whom Captain John Faa and other five of the name of Faa, being convicted, were doomed to death on the statute. Some days after, there were brought to trial Helen Faa, relict of Captain Faa, Lucretia Faa, and other women to the number of eleven ; all of whom were in like manner convicted, and condemned to be drowned ! But, in the end, their doom was commuted for banishment, (under pain of death,) to them and all their

race. The sentence was, however, executed on the male convicts ; and it appears that the terror of their fate had been of material service ; as, for the space of more than 50 years from that time, there is no trial of an Egyptian."

But notwithstanding this statement of Baron Hume, of the Gipsy trials having ceased for half a century, we find, twelve years after 1624, the date of the above trials, the following order of the privy council : "Anent some Egyptians. At Edinburgh, 10th November, 1636. Forasmuch as Sir Arthur Douglas of Qubittinghame having lately taken and apprehended some of the vagabond and counterfeit thieves and *limmers*, (scoundrels,) called the Egyptians, he presented and delivered them to the sheriff principal of the sheriffdom of Edinburgh, within the constabulary of Haddington, where they have remained this month or thereby : and whereas the keeping of them longer, within the said tolbooth, is troublesome and burdensome to the town of Haddington, and fosters the said thieves in an opinion of impunity, to the encouraging of the rest of that infamous *byke* (hive) of lawless *limmers* (scoundrels) to continue in their thievish trade : Therefore the lords of secret council ordain the sheriff of Haddington, or his deputies, to pronounce doom and sentence of death against so many of these counterfeit thieves as are men, and against so many of the women as want children ; ordaining the men to be hanged, and the women to be drowned ; and that such of the women as have children, to be scourged through the burgh of Haddington, and burned in the cheek ; and ordain and command the provost and baillies of Haddington to cause this doom be executed upon the said persons accordingly."*

"Towards the end of that century," continues Baron Hume, "the nuisance seems to have again become troublesome. On the 13th of December, 1698, John Baillie and six men more of the same name, along with the wife of one of them, were indicted as Egyptians, and also for sundry special misdeeds ; and being convicted, (all but the woman,) they were ordered for execution. But in this case it is to be remarked, that the court had so far departed from the rigour of the statute as not to sustain a relevancy on the habit and repute of being an Egyptian of itself, but only 'along with one or other of the facts of picking and little

* Blackwood's Magazine.

thieving ;' thus requiring some proof of actual guilt in aid of the fame. In the next trial, which was that of William Baillie, June 26th, 1699, a still further indulgence was introduced ; for the interlocutor required a proof, not of *one* only, but of *several*, of the facts of ' picking or little thieving, or of several acts of beating and striking with invasive weapons.' He was only convicted as an Egyptian, and of *one* act of striking with an invasive weapon, and he escaped in consequence with his life.

" This lenient course of dealing with the Gipsies was not taken, however, from any opinion of it as a necessary thing, nor was there any purpose of prescribing it as a rule for other times, or for further cases of the kind where such an indulgence might seem improper, as appears from the interlocutor of relevancy in the case of John Kerr, and Helen Yorkston, and William Baillie and other seven ; in both of which the simple fame and character of being an Egyptian is again found *separatum* relevant to infer the pain of death, (10th and 11th August, 1714.) Kerr and Yorkston had a verdict in their favour ; Baillie and two of his associates were condemned to die ; but as far as concerns Baillie, (for the others were executed,) his doom was afterwards mitigated into transportation, under pain of death in case of return.

" As early as the month of August, 1715, the same man, (as I understand it,) was again indicted, not only for being found in Britain, but for continuing his former practices and course of life. Notwithstanding this aggravation, the interlocutor is again framed on the indulgent plan, and only infers the pain of death, from the fame and character of being an Egyptian, joined with various acts of violence and sorn-ing, to the number of three, that are stated in the libel. Though convicted nearly to the extent of the interlocutor, he again escaped with transportation.*

" Nor have I observed that the court, in any later case, have thought it necessary to proceed upon the repute alone, unavouched by evidence of, at least, one act of theft or violence ; so that, upon the whole, according to the practice of later times, this sort of charge seems to be reduced nearly to the level of the charge of being habit and repute a thief at common law."

* This, and part of the preceding paragraph, will be quoted again, under the chapter of Tweed-dale and Clydesdale Gipsies.

It is noticed by Baron Hume that the Faas and the Baillies were noted names among the Gipsies. Indeed, the trials referred to by him are all of persons bearing these two surnames, except two individuals only. The truth is, the Faas and the Baillies were the two principal families among the Gipsies ; giving, according to their customs, kings and queens to their countrymen in Scotland. They would be more bold, daring, and presumptuous in their conduct than the most part of their followers ; and, being leaders of the banditti, government, in all probability, would fix upon them as the most proper objects for destruction, as the best and easiest method of overawing and dispersing the whole tribe in the country, by cutting off their chiefs. As I have already mentioned, these two principal clans of Faw and Bailow appear to be the only Gipsy families in Scotland who have retained the original surnames of their ancestors, at least of those whose names are inserted in the treaty with James V, in 1540.

It will be seen, under the head Tweed-dale and Clydesdale Gipsies, that tradition has represented William Baillie, who was tried in 1714 and 1715, as a bastard son of the ancient family of Lamington, (his mother being a Gipsy). It appears to me that the Gipsy policy of joining themselves to some family of rank was, in Baillie's case, of very important service, not only to himself but to the whole tribe in Scotland.*

* From the time of arrival of the Gipsies in the country, in 1506, till 1611, the date of the first trials of the tribe, as given by Baron Hume, a period of 105 years had elapsed ; during which time there had doubtless been five generations of Gipsies added to the population, as Scottish subjects ; to put whom to death, on the mere ground of being Egyptians, was contrary to every principle of natural justice. The cruelty exercised upon them was quite in keeping with that of reducing to slavery the individuals, and their descendants, who constituted the colliers, coal-bearers, and salters referred to in the following interesting note, to be found in " My Schools and Schoolmasters," of Hugh Miller.

"The act for manumitting our Scotch colliers was passed in the year 1775, forty-nine years prior to the date of my acquaintance with the class of Niddry. But though it was only such colliers of the village as were in their fiftieth year when I knew them, (with, of course, all the older ones,) who had been born slaves, even its men of thirty had actually, though not nominally, come into the world in a state of bondage, in consequence of certain penalties attached to the emancipation act, of which the poor ignorant workers under ground were both too improvident and too little ingenious to keep clear. They were set free, however, by a second act passed in 1799. The language of both these acts, regarded as British ones of the latter half of the last century, and as bearing reference to British subjects

The extraordinary lenity shown to him by the court, after such repeated aggravation, cannot be accounted for in any other way than that great interest had been used in his behalf, in some quarter or other ; and that, by creating a merciful precedent in his case, it was afterwards followed in the trial of all others of the race in Scotland.

living within the limits of the island, strikes with startling effect. 'Whereas,' says the preamble of the older act—that of 1775—'by the statute law of Scotland, as explained by the judges of the courts of law there, many colliers, and coal-bearers, and salters, are in a state of *slavery or bondage*, bound to the collieries or salt works, where they work *for life, transferable with the collieries or salt works* ; and whereas, the emancipation,' &c., &c. A passage in the preamble of the act of 1799 is scarcely less striking: it declares that, notwithstanding the former act, 'many colliers and coal-bearers *still continue in a state of bondage*' in Scotland. The history of our Scotch colliers would be found a curious and instructive one. Their slavery seems not to have been derived from the ancient time of general serfship, but to have originated in comparatively modern acts of the Scottish Parliament, and in decisions of the Court of Session—in acts of Parliament in which the poor ignorant subterranean men of the country were, of course, wholly unrepresented, and in decisions of a court in which no agent of theirs ever made appearance in their behalf."

What is here said of a history of Scotch colliers being "curious and instructive," is applicable in an infinitely greater degree to that of the Gipsies.—ED.

CHAPTER IV.

LINLITHGOWSHIRE GIPSIES.*

THE Gipsies who frequented the banks of the Forth, and the counties northward, appear to have been more daring than those who visited some other parts of Scotland.

Within these sixty years, a large horde, of very desperate character, resided on the banks of the Avon, near the burgh of Linlithgow. At first, they quartered higher up on the Stirling side of the stream, at a place called Walkmilton ; but latterly they took up their abode in some old houses, on the Linlithgow side of the river, at or near the bridge of Linlithgow.

These Gipsies displayed much sagacity in carrying on their trade, by selecting the neighbourhood of Falkirk and Linlithgow for their headquarters, as this was, perhaps, the most advantageous position in all Scotland that a Gipsy band could occupy. The district was of itself very populous, and a very considerable trade and bustle then existed at the port of Bo'ness, in the vicinity. All the intercourse between Edinburgh and Glasgow passed a few miles to the south of their quarters. The traffic, by carts, between Glasgow and the west of Scotland, and the shipping at Carron-shore, Elphinston-Pow and Airth, on the Forth, before the canal was cut, was immense ; all which traffic, as well as that between Fife and the western districts; passed a few miles north of

* This and the following three chapters are illustrative of the Gipsies, in their wild state, previous to their gradual settlement and civilization, and are applicable to the same class in every part of the world. Chapter VI, on the Gipsies of Tweed-dale and Clydesdale, might have been taken the first in order, as descriptive of the tribe in its more primitive condition, but I have allowed it to remain where it stands. A description of the habits peculiar to the race will be found, more or less, in all of these chapters, where they can be consulted, for the better identification of the facts given.—ED.

their position. The road for travellers and cattle from the Highlands, by way of Stirling, crossed the above-mentioned roads, and led, through Falkirk and Linlithgow, to Edinburgh, the eastern and southern counties of Scotland, and England.

The principal surnames of this Gipsy band were McDonald, Jamieson, Wilson, Gordon and Lundie. Frequently the number that would assemble together would amount to upwards of thirty souls, and it was often observed that a great many females and children were seen loitering about their common place of residence. No protection was given by them to our native vagrants, nor were any of our common plunderers, vagabonds, or outlaws suffered to remain among them. When at home, or traversing the country, the trade and occupation of this band were exactly the same as those of their friends in other parts of Scotland, viz: making wool-cards, cast-iron soles for ploughs, smoothing-irons, horn spoons, and repairing articles in the tinker line. The old females told fortunes, while the women in general assisted their husbands in their work, by blowing the bellows, scraping and polishing the spoons with glass and charred wood, and otherwise completing their articles for sale. Many of the males dealt in horses, with which they frequented fairs—that great resort of the Gipsies; and these wanderers, in general, were considered excellent judges of horses. Numbers of them were fiddlers and pipers, and the tribe often amused themselves with feasting and dancing.*

Like their race generally, these Gipsies were extremely civil and obliging to their immediate neighbours, and those who lived nearest to their quarters, and had the most intercourse with them, in the ordinary affairs of life, were the least afraid of them.† But the farmers and others at a dis-

* It appears that, at this period, James Wilson, town-piper, and John Livingston, hangman, of Linlithgow, were both Gipsies. [Formerly the Gipsies were exclusively employed in Hungary and Transylvania as hangmen and executioners. *Grellmann*.—Ed.]

† This trait in the character of the Scottish Gipsies is well illustrated in the following anecdote, which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*. It was obtained by an individual who frequently heard the clergyman in question relate it.

"The late Mr. Leck, minister of Yetholm, happened to be riding home one evening from a visit in Northumberland, when, finding himself likely to be benighted, for sake of a near cut, he struck into a wild, solitary track, or drove-road, across the fells, by a place called the Staw. In one of the

tance, who frequented the markets at Falkirk, and other fairs in the neighbourhood, were always a plentiful harvest for the plundering Tinklers. Their plunderings on such occasions spread a general alarm over the country. But that good humour, mirth, and jocund disposition, peculiar to many of the males of the Gipsies, seldom failed to gain the good-will of those who deigned to converse with them with familiarity, or treated them with kindness. They even formed strong attachments to certain individuals of the community, and afforded them protection on all occasions, giving them tokens to present to others of their fraternity, while travelling under night. Notwithstanding the good disposition which they always showed under these circumstances, the fiery Tinklers often fell out among themselves, on dividing, at home, the booty which they had collected at fairs, and excited feelings of horror in the minds of their astonished neighbours, when they beheld the hurricanes of wrath and fury exhibited by both sexes, and all ages, in the heat of their battles.

The children of these Gipsies attended the principal school

derne places through which this path led him, there stood an old deserted shepherd's house, which, of course, was reputed to be haunted. The minister, though little apt to be alarmed by such reports, was, however, somewhat startled on observing, as he approached close to the cottage, a 'grim visage' staring out past a *window clath*, or sort of curtain, which had been fastened up to supply the place of a door, and also several 'dusky figures,' skulking among the bourtrees-bushes that had once sheltered the shepherd's garden. Without leaving him any time for speculation, however, the knight of the curtain bolted forth upon him, and, seizing his horse by the bridle, demanded his money. Mr. Leek, though it was now dark, at once recognised the gruff voice, and the great, black, burly head of his next-door neighbour, *Gleid Neckit Will*, the Gipsy chief. 'Dear me, William,' said the minister, in his usual quiet manner, 'can this be you? ye're surely no serious wi' me? ye wadna sae far wrang your character for a good neighbour, for the bit trifle I ha'e to gi'e, William?'—'Lord saif us, Mr. Leek!' said Will, quitting the rein, and lifting his hat, with great respect, 'Whao wad hae thought o' meeting you out owre here-away? Ye needna gripe for ony siller to me—I wadna touch a plack o' your gear, nor a hair o' your head, for a' the gowd o' Tividale. I ken ye'll no do us an ill turn for this mistak—and I'll e'en see ye safe through the eirie Staw—it's no reckoned a very *canny bit*, mair ways nor ane; but I wat ye'll no be feared for the dead, and I'll tak care o' the living.' Will accordingly gave his reverend friend a safe convoy through the haunted pass, and, notwithstanding this ugly mistake, continued ever after an inoffensive and obliging neighbour to the minister, who, on his part, observed a prudent and inviolable secrecy on the subject of this rencounter, during the life time of *Gleid Nickit Will*."

I understand this anecdote to apply to old Will Faa, mentioned in the Border Gipsies, under chapter VII.—Ed.

at Linlithgow, and not an individual at the school dared to cast the slightest reflection on, or speak a disrespectful word of, either them or their parents, although their robberies were everywhere notorious, yet always conducted in so artful a manner that no direct evidence could ever be obtained of them. Such was the fear that the audacious conduct of these Gipsies inspired, that the magistrates of the royal burgh of Linlithgow stood in awe of them, and were deterred from discharging their magisterial duties, when any matter relative to their conduct came before their honours. The truth is, the magistrates would not interfere with them at all, but stood nearly on the same terms with them that a tribe of American Indians, who worshipped the devil—not from any respect which they had for his Satanic majesty, but from being in constant dread of his diabolical machinations. Not a justice of the peace gave the horde the least annoyance, but, on the contrary, allowed them to remain in peaceable possession of some old, uninhabited houses, to which they had no right whatever. Instead of endeavouring to repress the unlawful proceedings of the daring Tinklers, numbers of the most respectable individuals in Linlithgowshire deigned to play at golf and other games with the principal members of the body. The proficiency which the Gipsies displayed on such occasions was always a source of interest to the patrons and admirers of such games. At throwing the sledge-hammer, casting the putting-stone, and all other athletic exercises, not one was a match for these powerful Tinklers. They were also remarkably dexterous at handling the cudgel, at which they were constantly practising themselves.

The honourable magistrates, indeed, frequently admitted the presumptuous Tinklers to share a social bowl with them at their entertainments and dinner parties. Yet these friends and companions of the magistrates and gentlemen of Linlithgowshire were no other than the occasional tenants of kilns, or temporary occupiers of the ground floor of some ruinous, half-roofed houses, without furniture, saving a few blankets and some straw, to prevent their persons from resting upon the cold earth. But, nevertheless, these Gipsies made themselves of considerable importance, and possessed an influence over the minds of the community to an extent hardly to be credited at the present day. It was well

known that the provost of Linlithgow, who was much exposed by riding at all times through the country, in the way of his business as a brewer, had himself received from the Gipsies assurance that he would not be molested by the band, and that he was, therefore, at all times, and on all occasions, perfectly safe from being plundered. Having in this manner rendered the local authorities entirely passive, or rather neutral, from fear and interest, the audacious Gipsies prosecuted their system of plunder and robbery to an alarming extent.

Notwithstanding the fear which these Gipsies inspired in the mind of the community, there were yet individuals of courage who would brave them, if circumstances rendered a meeting with them unavoidable. None, indeed, would dream of wantonly molesting them, but, if brought to the pinch, some would not shrink from encountering them, when acting under the influences of those feelings which call forth the latent courage of even the most timid and considerate of people. Such a rencounter resulted in the death of the chief of the Linlithgow band, of the name of McDonald, to whom the others of the tribe gave the title of captain.

In a dark night, a gentleman of the name of H——, an officer in the army, and a man of courage, while travelling on the high road, from the eastward to Stirlingshire, to visit, as was said, his sweetheart, had occasion to stop, for refreshment, at a public-house near the bridge of Linlithgow. The landlord advised him to go no further that night, owing to the road being "foul," meaning that the Tinklers had been seen lurking in the direction in which he was travelling. Foul or not foul, he would proceed; his particular engagement with the lady making him reluctant to break his promise, and turn back. He called for a gill of brandy, which he shared with the landlord, and deliberately loaded, in his presence, a brace of pistols which he carried about his person. His courage rose with the occasion, and he declared that whoever dared to molest him should not go unpunished. He then mounted his horse and rode forward. On arriving at a place called Sandy-ford-burn, a man, in the dark, sprang out from the side of the road, and, laying hold of the bridle of his horse, demanded his money. The horseman being on the alert, and quite prepared for such a demand, with his spirits, moreover, elevated by his dram of brandy, instantly

replied by firing one of his pistols at the robber, who fell to the ground. He, however, held fast the bridle reins in his convulsive death grasp, and the horse, being urged forward, dragged him a short distance along the ground. Hardly had the shot been fired, ere a voice, close by, was heard to exclaim, "There goes our captain," while a confused cry of vengeance was uttered on all sides, against him by whom he had fallen. But the rider, clapping his spurs to his horse, instantly galloped forward, yet made a narrow escape, for several shots were fired at him, which were heard by the landlord of the public-house which he had just left.

The Gipsies, in this awkward predicament, carried the body of their chieftain home, and gave out to their neighbours, the country people, the following morning, (Sunday,) that he had died very suddenly of iliac passion. His lyke-wake was kept up in their usual manner, and great feastings and drinkings were held by them while his body lay uninterred. After several days of carousing, the remains of the robber were buried in the church-yard of Linlithgow.* His funeral was very respectable, having been attended by the magistrates of Linlithgow, and a number of the most genteel persons in the neighbourhood. The real cause of the sudden death of the Tinkler began to spread abroad, a short time after the burial, but no enquiry was made into the matter. The individual who had done the public a service, by taking off the chief of the banditti, mentioned the circumstance afterwards to his friends, and was afraid of the band for some time thereafter; although it was improbable that, in the dark, they were able to make out, or afterwards ascertain, the person who had made himself so obnoxious to them.

Notwithstanding this prompt and well-merited chastisement which the Gipsies received, in their leader being shot dead in his attempt at highway robbery, in the immediate vicinity of their ordinary place of rendezvous, they continued their depredations in their usual manner, but generally took care, as is their custom, to give no molestation to their

* Some of the Gipsies only put a paper cap on the head, and paper round the feet, of their dead; leaving all the body bare, excepting that they place upon the breast, opposite the heart, a circle made of red and blue ribbons, in form something like the shape of the variegated cockade, worn in the hats of newly-enlisted recruits in the army. [In England it was customary with the Gipsies, at one time, to burn the dead, but now they only burn the clothes, and some of the effects of the deceased.—Ed.]

nearest neighbours. The deceased captain was succeeded, in the chieftainship of the tribe, by his son, Alexander McDonald, who also assumed the title of captain. This man trod in the footsteps of his father in every respect, and exercised his hereditary profession of theft and robbery, with an activity and audacity unequalled by any among his tribe in that part of Scotland. The very name of McDonald and his gang appalled the boldest hearts of those who ventured to travel under night with money in their pockets, in certain parts of the country. His band appears to have been very numerous, as among them some held the subordinate rank of lieutenants, as if they had been organized like a regular military company. James Jamieson, his brother-in-law, was also styled captain in this notorious band of Gipsies, who were connected with similar bands in England and Ireland.

McDonald and his brother-in-law, Jamieson, were considered remarkably stout, handsome, and fine-looking men. By constant training at all kinds of athletic exercises, they brought themselves to perform feats of bodily strength and agility which were almost incredible. They were often elegantly dressed in the finest clothes of the first fashion, with linen to correspond. At the same time they were perfect chameleons in respect to their appearance and apparel. McDonald was frequently observed in three or four different dresses in one market-day. At one time of the day, he was seen completely attired in the best of tartan, assuming the appearance and manners of a highland gentleman in full costume. At another time, he appeared ruffled at hands and breast, booted and spurred, on horseback, as if he had been a man of some consideration. He would again be seen in a ragged coat, with a budget and wallet on his back—a common travelling Tinkler. Both of these men often dealt in horses, and were themselves frequently mounted on the best of animals. The Arabians and Tartars are scarcely more partial to horses than the Gipsies.

The pranks and tricks played by McDonald were numerous, and many a story is yet remembered of his extraordinary exploits. He took great pains in training and learning some of his horses various evolutions and tricks. He had, at one time, a piebald horse so efficiently trained, and so completely under his management, that it, in some respects,

assisted him in his depredations. By certain signals and motions, he could, when he found it necessary, make it clap close to the ground, like a hare in its furrow. It would crouch down in a hollow piece of ground, in a ditch, or at the side of a hedge, so as to hide itself, when McDonald's situation was like to expose him to detection. With the assistance of one of these well trained-horses, this man, on one occasion, saved his wife, Ann Jamieson, from prison, and perhaps from the gallows. Ann was apprehended near Dunfermline for some of her unlawful practices. As the officers of the law were conducting her to prison, McDonald rode up to the party, and requested permission to speak with their prisoner, which was readily granted, as, from McDonald's appearance, the officers supposed he had something to say to the woman. He then drew her aside, under the pretence of conversing with her in private, when, in an instant, Ann, with his assistance, sprang upon the horse, behind him, and bade good-bye to the messengers, who were amazed at the sudden and unexpected escape of their prisoner. Ann was a little, handsome woman, and was considered one of the most expert of the Scottish Gipsies at conducting a plundering at a fair ; and was, on that account, much respected by her tribe.

McDonald and Jamieson, like others of the superior classes of Gipsies, gave tokens of protection to their particular friends of the community generally. The butchers of Linlithgow, when they went to the country, with money to buy cattle, frequently procured these assurances from the Gipsies. The shoemakers did likewise, when they had to go to distant markets with their shoes. Linlithgow appears even to have been under the special protection of these banditti. Mr. George Hart, and Mr. William Baird, two of the most respectable merchants of Bo'ness, who had been peddlers in their early years, scrupled not to say that, when travelling through the country, they were seldom without tokens from the Gipsies. But if the Gipsies were kind to those who kept on good terms with them, they, on the other hand, vindictively tormented their enemies. They would steal sheep, and put the blood and parts of the animal about the premises of those they hated, that they might be suspected of the theft, searched and affronted by the enquiries made about the stolen property.

When McDonald and Jamieson attacked individuals on the highway, or elsewhere, and were satisfied that they had little or no money, they were just as ready to supply their wants as to rob them. The idea of plundering the wealthy, and giving the booty to the poor, gives the Gipsies great satisfaction. The standard by which this people's conduct can be measured, must be sought for among the robber tribes of Tartary, Afghanistan, or Arabia. Many of our Scottish Gipsies have, indeed, been as ready to give a purse as take one; and it cannot be said that they have lacked in the display of a certain degree of honour peculiar to themselves, as the following well-authenticated fact will illustrate.*

A gentleman, whose name is not mentioned, while travelling, under night, between Falkirk and Linlithgow, fell in, on the road, with a man whom he did not know. During the conversation which ensued, he mentioned to the stranger that he was afraid of being attacked, for many a one, he observed, had been robbed on that road. He then urged that they should return, as the safest plan for them both. The stranger, however, replied that he had often travelled the road, yet had never been troubled by any one. After some further conversation, he put his hand into his pocket, and gave the traveller a knife, with which he was desired to proceed without fear.† The traveller now perfectly understood the relation that existed between them, and continued his journey with confidence; but he had not proceeded far ere he was accosted by a foot-pad, to whom he produced the knife. The pad looked at it carefully, said nothing, but passed on, without giving the traveller the slightest annoyance. It is needless to say that the mysterious stranger was no other than the notorious Captain McDonald. The traveller, by his fears and the nature of his conversation, had plainly informed McDonald of his being possessed of money—a considerable quantity of which he had, indeed, with him—and had the love of booty been the Gipsy's sole and con-

* Instances have occurred in which an Afghan has received a stranger with all the rights of hospitality, and afterwards, meeting him in the open country, has robbed him. The same person, it is supposed, who would plunder a cloak from a traveller who had one, would give a cloak to one who had none.—*Hugh Murray's Asia*, vol. 2, page 508.

† A pen-knife, a snuff-box, and a ring are some of the Gipsy pass-ports. It is what is marked upon them that protects the bearer from being disturbed by others of the tribe.

stant object, how easily could he, in this instance, have possessed himself of it. But the stranger had put himself, in a measure, under the protection of the robber, who disdained to take advantage of the confidence reposed in him.

Another instance of a Gipsy's honour, generosity, or caprice, or by whatever word the act may be expressed, occurred between McDonald and a farmer of the name of Campbell, and exhibits a singular cast of character, which has not been uncommon among the Scottish Gipsies. On this occasion, it would appear, the Gipsy had been influenced rather by a desire of enjoying the extraordinary surprise of the simple countryman, than of obtaining booty. The occurrence will also give some idea of the part which the cautious chiefs take in plundering at a fair. The particulars are derived from a Mr. David McRitchie, of whom I shall again make mention.

While Campbell was on his way to a market in Perth, he fell in with Captain McDonald. Being unacquainted with the character of his fellow-traveller, the unsuspecting man told him, among other things, that he had just as much money in his pocket as would purchase one horse, for his four-horse plough, having other three at home. McDonald heard all this with patience till he came to a solitary part of the road, when, all at once, he turned upon the astonished farmer, and demanded his money. The poor man, having no alternative, immediately produced his purse. But in parting, the robber desired him to call next day at a certain house in Perth, where he would find a person who might be of some service to him. Campbell promised to do as desired, and called at the house appointed, and great was his surprise, when, on being ushered into a room, he found himself face to face with the late robber, sitting with a large bowl of smoking toddy before him. The Gipsy, in a frank and hearty manner, invited his visitor to sit down and share his toddy with him; a request which he readily complied with, although bewildered with the idea of the probable fate of his purse, and the result of his personal adventure. He had scarcely got time, however, to swallow one glass, before he was relieved of his suspense, by the Gipsy returning him every farthing of the money he had robbed him of the day before. Being now pleased with his good fortune, and the Gipsy pressing him to drink, Campbell was in no hurry to be gone, his spirits having become elevated with his good cheer, and the

confidence with which his host's conduct had inspired him. But his suspicions returned upon him, as he saw pocket-book after pocket-book brought in to his entertainer, during the time he was enjoying his hospitality. The Gipsy chief was, in fact, but following a very important branch of his calling, and was, on that day, doing a considerable business, having a number of youths ferreting for him in the market, and coming in and going out constantly.

But this crafty Gipsy, and his brother-in-law, Jamieson, were at last apprehended for house-breaking and robbery. Their trials took place at Edinburgh, on the 9th and 13th of August, 1770, and "the fame of being Egyptians" made part of the charge against them in the indictment; a charge well founded, as both of them spoke the "right Egyptian language." It was the last instance, I believe, that the fact of their being "called, known, repute, and holden Egyptians," made part of the indictment against any of the tribe in Scotland, under the sanguinary statute of James VI, chap. 13, passed in 1609. So cunning are the Gipsies, however, in committing crimes, that, in this instance, the criminals, it was understood, would have escaped justice, for want of sufficient proof, had not one of their own band, of the name of Jamieson, a youth of about twenty-two years of age, turned king's evidence against his associates. The two unhappy men were then found guilty by the jury, and condemned to die. They were ordered to be executed at Linlithgow bridge, near the very spot where their band had their principal rendezvous, with the apparent object of daunting their incorrigible race.

Immediately after the trial, a report was spread, and generally believed, that the Gipsies would attempt a rescue of the criminals on the way to execution, or even from under the gallows itself; and it was particularly mentioned that thirty stout and desperate members of the race had undertaken to set their chieftains free. Every precaution was therefore taken, by the authorities, to prevent any such attempt being made. A large proportion of the gentlemen and farmers of the shire of Linlithgow were requested, with what arms they could procure, to attend, on foot or horseback, the execution of the desperate Tinklers. Indeed, every third man of all the fencible men of the county was called upon to appear on the occasion; while a company of

pensioners, with a commissioned officer at their head, and a strong body of the military, completed the force deemed necessary for the due execution of justice. Besides guarding against the possibility of a rescue on the part of the Gipsies, it was generally understood that the steps taken by the authorities, in bringing together so large a body of men, had in view the object of exhibiting to the people the ignominious death of two men who had not only been allowed to remain among them, but, in many instances, countenanced by some of the most respectable inhabitants of the county; and that not only in out-door amusements, but even in some of the special hospitalities of daily life, while in fact they were nothing but the leaders of a band of notorious thieves and robbers.

These precautions being completed, the condemned Gipsies were bound hand and foot, and conveyed, by the sheriff of Edinburgh and a company of the military, to the boat-house bridge, on the river Almond—the boundary of the two counties—and there handed over to the sheriff of Linlithgow; under whose guard they were carried to the jail of the town of Linlithgow, and securely bound in irons, to wait their execution on the morrow.* As night approached, fires were kindled at the door of the prison, and guards posted in the avenues leading to the building, while all the entrances to the town were guarded, and all ingress and egress prohibited, as if the burgh had been in a state of siege. So strictly were these orders put in force, that many of the inhabitants of Bo'ness, who had gone to Linlithgow, to view the bustle occasioned by the assemblage of so great a number of armed men, were forced to remain in the town over night; so alarmed were the authorities for the onset of the resolute Gipsies. It was soon perceived, by some sagacious individuals, that the fires would do more harm than good, as the light would show the prison, expose the sentinels, and guide the Gipsy bands. They were accordingly extinguished,

* "This morning, a little after nine o'clock, McDonald and Jamieson were transported from the Tolbooth here, (Edinburgh,) escorted by a party of the military, and attended by the sheriff-depute on horseback, with the officers of court, armed with broad-swords, amidst an innumerable crowd of spectators. They were securely pinioned to a cart, and are to be received by the sheriff-depute of Linlithgow, on the confines of this county, whither they are to be conveyed, in order to their execution to-morrow, near Linlithgow-bridge, pursuant to their sentence."—*Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine*, vol 9, page 384.

and the guards placed in such positions as would enable them, with the most advantage, to repel any attack that might be attempted: yet the enemy that caused all this alarm and precaution was nowhere visible.

On the following morning, McDonald's wife requested permission to visit her husband before being led to execution, with what particular object can only be conjectured; a favour which was readily granted her, in the company of a magistrate. On beholding the object of her affection, she became overwhelmed with grief; she threw her arms around his neck, and embraced him most tenderly; and after giving vent to her sorrow in sobs and tears, she tore herself from him, and, turning to the magistrate, exclaimed, with a bursting heart, "Is he not a pretty man? What a pity it is to hang him!"

Arrangements were then made to carry the prisoners to the place of execution, at the bridge of Linlithgow, which lay about a mile from the town. The armed force was drawn up at the town-cross, and those who carried muskets were ordered to load them with ball cartridge, and hold themselves ready, at the word of command, upon the least appearance of an attempt at rescue, to fire upon the aggressors. The whole scene presented such an alarming and warlike appearance, that the people of the town and surrounding country compared it to the bustle and military parade which took place, twenty-five years before, when the rebel-army made its appearance in the neighbourhood. The judicious arrangements adopted by the officers of the crown had the desired effect; for not the slightest symptom of disturbance, not even a movement, was observed among the Gipsies, either on the night before, or on the morning of the execution. The formidable armed bands, ready to overwhelm the presumptuous Gipsies, clearly showed them that they had not the shadow of a chance for carrying out their intended rescue. All was peace and silence throughout the immense crowd surrounding the gallows, patiently waiting the appearance of the criminals. In due time the condemned made their appearance, in a cart, accompanied by Charles and James Jamieson, two youths, sitting beside their father and uncle, busily eating rolls, and, to all appearance, totally indifferent to the fate of their relatives, and the awful circumstances surrounding them.

On ascending the platform, Jamieson's demeanour was suitable to the circumstances in which he found himself placed; but McDonald appeared quite unconcerned. He was observed frequently to turn a quid of tobacco in his mouth, and squirt the juice of it around him; it was even evident, from his manner, that he expected to be delivered from the gallows by his tribe; and more especially as he had been frequently heard to say that the hemp was not grown that would hang him. He then began to look frequently and wistfully around him for the expected aid, yet none made its appearance; and his heart began to sink within him. Indeed, the overwhelming force then surrounding him rendered a deliverance impossible. Every hope having failed him, and seeing his end at hand, McDonald resigned himself, with great firmness, to his fate, and exclaimed: "I have neither friends on my right hand nor on my left; I see I now must die." Jamieson, who appeared from the first never to indulge in vain expectations of being rescued, exclaimed to his fellow-sufferer: "Sandie, Sandie! it is all over with us, and I told you so long ago." McDonald then turned to the executioner, whose name was John Livingston, and dropping into his hand something, supposed to be money, undauntedly said to him: "Now, John, don't bungle your job." Both of the unhappy men were then launched into eternity. Ever afterwards, the inhabitants of Linlithgow pestered the hangman, by calling to him: "Now, John, don't bungle your job. What was it the Tinkler gave you, John?"*

McDonald's wife had stood by, a quiet spectator, among the promiscuous crowd, of the melancholy scene displayed before her. But when she had witnessed the closing act of an eventful life—the heroism and fortitude which all she held as dear displayed in his last moments—and enjoyed the satisfaction which it had given her, nature, which the odium of her fellow-creatures, not of her blood, could not destroy, burst forth with genuine expression. The silence attending the awful tragedy was abruptly broken by the lamentable yells and heart-rending screams which she gave vent to, as

* "On Friday last, about three o'clock, McDonald and Jamieson were hanged, at the end of Linlithgow bridge. The latter appeared very penitent, but the former very little affected, and, as the saying is, *died hard*."—*Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine*, vol. 9, page 416.

she beheld her husband turned off the scaffold. Two gentlemen, who were present, informed me that she foamed at the mouth, and tore her hair out of her head, and was so completely frantic with grief and rage, that the spectators were afraid to go near her.

On the bodies being taken down from the scaffold, an attempt was made to restore them to life, by opening a vein, but without effect. It is said they were buried in the moor near Linlithgow, by the Gipsies, and that the magistrates of the town ordered them to be taken up, and interred in the east end of the church-yard of Linlithgow. However that may be, the bodies were buried in the church-yard of Linlithgow; but the populace, delivered from the terror with which these daring Gipsies inspired them, treated with ignominy the remains of those whom they dared scarcely look in the face when alive. They dug them out of the place of Christian sepulture, and interred them in a solitary field in the neighbourhood. A clump of trees, I believe, marks the spot, and the gloomy pine now waves, in the winds of heaven, over the silent and peaceful graves of the restless and lawless Gipsies.

McDonald, it would appear, was married, first of all, to a daughter of a Gipsy of the name of Eppie Lundie, with whom he lived unhappy, and was divorced from her over a horse sacrificed for the occasion, a ceremony which I will describe in another chapter.* He was more fortunate in his second matrimonial alliance, for, in Ann Jamieson, he found a wife after his own heart in every way. Previous to his own execution, she had witnessed the violent deaths of at least six of her own nearest relatives. But, if anything could have influenced, in the slightest degree, a reformation in her own character, it would have been the melancholy scene attending his miserable end; yet, we find it had not the slightest effect upon her after career, for she continued, to the last, to follow the practices of her race, as an anecdote told of her will show.

At the North Queensferry was a very respectable inn, kept by a Mr. McRitchie, which was much frequented and patron-

* This Eppie Lundie lived to the advanced age of a hundred years, and was a terror wherever she travelled. Without the least hesitation or scruple, she frequently stripped defenceless individuals of their wearing apparel, leaving them sometimes naked in the open fields.

ized by the Gipsies. On such occasions they did not visit the house in whole families or hordes, fluttering in rags, but as well-dressed individuals, arriving from different directions, as if by chance. In this house they were always treated with consideration and kindness, for other reasons than that of the liberal custom which they brought to it, and, as a natural consequence, the landlord and his family became great favourites with them. One of the members of the family, David McRitchie, my informant, happened one day to purchase a horse, at a fair in Dunfermline, but in feeling for his pocket-book, to pay for the animal, he found, to his surprise and grief, that book and money were gone. The person from whom he bought the horse commenced at once to abuse him as an impostor, for he not only would not believe his tale, but would not trust him for a moment. Under these distressing circumstances, he sought out Ann Jamieson, or Annie McDonald, after her husband's name, for he knew well enough where his money had gone to, and the sovereign influence which Ann exercised over her tribe. Being well acquainted with her, from having often met her in his father's house, he went up to her, and putting his hand gently on her shoulder, in a kind and familiar manner, and with a long face, told her of his misfortune, and begged her friendly assistance to help him out of the difficulty, laying much stress on the horse-dealer charging him with an attempt to impose on him. "Some 'o' my laddies will hae seen it, Davie ; I'll enquire," was her immediate reply. She then took him to a public-house, called for brandy, saw him seated, and desired him to drink. Taking the marks of the pocket-book, she entered the fair, and, after various doublings and windings among the crowd, proceeded to her temporary depot of stolen goods. In about half an hour she returned, with the book and all its contents. The cash, bills, and papers which it contained, were in the same parts of the book in which the owner had placed them. This affair was transacted in as cool and business-like a manner as if Annie and her "laddies" had been following any of the honest callings in ordinary life. Indeed, no example, however severe, no punishment, however awful, seems to have had any beneficial effect upon the minds of these Gipsies, or their friends who frequented the surrounding parts of the country, for they continued to follow the ways of their race, in spite of the sanguinary laws

of the country. A continuation of their history, up to a period, is little better than a melancholy narrative of a series of imprisonments, banishments, and executions.

Ann Jamieson's two nephews, Charles and James Jamieson, who rode alongside of their father and uncle to the place of their execution, eating rolls, as if nothing unusual was about to befall them, and who had witnessed their miserable end, in 1770, were themselves executed in 1786 for robbing the Kinross mail. It was their intention to have committed the deed upon the highway, for, the night before the robbery, their mother, Euphan Graham, to prevent detection, insisted upon the post-boy being put to death, to which bloody proposition her sons would not consent. It was then agreed that they should secure their prize in the stable yard of an inn in the town, where the post-boy usually stopped. The two highwaymen were traced to a small house near Stirling, in which they made a desperate resistance. One of them attempted to ascend the chimney, to effect his escape; but, failing in that, they attacked the officers, and tore at them with their teeth, after having struck furiously at them with a knife. But they were overpowered, and secured in irons. Two females were in their company at the time, on whom some of the money was found, most artfully concealed about their persons. So illiterate were these two men that, in crossing the Forth at Kincardine, they presented a twenty-pound note, to be changed, instead of a twenty-shilling one. According to Baron Hume, the trial of these two Gipsies took place on the 18th December, 1786. They were assisted in the robbery by other members of their band, including women and children. Their mother was said to have been transported for the part which she took in the affair; while another member of the gang was below the age at which criminals can be tried and punished in this country. The two brothers, before they committed the crime, measured themselves in a room in Kinross, kept by a Mary Barclay, and marked their heights on the wall. The one stood six feet two inches, and the other five feet four inches.*

* Perhaps the author intended to say, six feet two inches, and six feet four inches. Still, it might have been as stated in the MS.; for with Gipsies of mixed blood, the individual, if he takes after the Gipsy, is apt to be short and thick-set. The mixture of the two people produces a strong race of men.—ED.

CHAPTER V.

FIFE AND STIRLINGSHIRE GIPSIES.

IN this account of the Gipsies in Fife, the horde which at one period resided at the village of Lochgellie are frequently referred to. But it is proper to premise that this noted band were not the only Gipsies in Fife. This populous county contained, at one time, a great number of nomadic Gipsies. The Falkland hills and the Falkland fairs were greatly frequented by them ;* and, not far from St. Andrews, some of the tribe had, within these fifty years, a small farm, containing about twenty acres of waste land, on which they had a small foundry, which the country people, on that account, called "Little Carron." As my materials for this chapter are chiefly derived from the Lochgellie band, and their immediate connexions in other districts not far from Fife, their manners and customs are, on that account, brought more under review.

The village of Lochgellie was, at one time, a favourite resort of the Gipsies. The grounds in its immediate vicinity are exactly of that character upon which they seem to have

* In Oliver and Boyd's *Scottish Tourist*, (1852), page 181, occurs the following passage: "A singular set of vagrants existed long in Falkland, called *Scrapies*, who had no other visible means of existence than a horse or a cow. Their ostensible employment was the carriage of commodities to the adjoining villages, and in the intervals of work they turned out their cattle to graze on the Lomond Hill. Their excursions at night were long and mysterious, for the pretended object of procuring coals, but they roamed with their little carts through the country-side, securing whatever they could lift, and plundering fields in autumn. Whenever any enquiry was addressed to a Falkland *Scrapie* as to the support of his horse, the ready answer was, 'Ou, he gangs up the (Lomond) Hill, ye ken.' This is now prevented; the Lomond is enclosed, and the *Scrapies* now manage their affairs on the road-sides."

The people mentioned in this extract are doubtless those to whom our author alludes. The reader will notice some resemblance between them and the tribe in the Pyrenees, as described at page 87.—Ed.

fixed their permanent, or rather winter's residence, in a great many parts of Scotland. By the statistical account of the parish of Auchterderran, Lochgellie was almost inaccessible for nearly six months in the year. The bleak and heathy morasses, and rushy wastes, with which the village is surrounded, have a gloomy and melancholy aspect. The scenery and face of the adjoining country are very similar to those in the neighbourhood of Biggar, in Lanarkshire, and Middleton, in Midlothian, which were also, at that time, Gipsy stations. A little to the south of the spot where the Linlithgow band, at one period, had their quarters, the country becomes moory, bleak, and barren. The village of Kirk-Yetholm, at present full of Gipsies, is also situated upon the confines of a wild, pastoral tract, among the Cheviot hills.* The Gipsies, in general, appear to have located themselves upon grounds of a flattish character, between the cultivated and uncultivated districts; having, on one side, a fertile and populous country, and, on the other, a heathy, boggy, and barren waste, into which they could retire in times of danger.†

In the statistical account of Auchterderran, just alluded to, is to be found the following notice of the Lochgellie Gipsies: "There are a few persons called *Tinkers* and *Horners*, half resident and half itinerant, who are feared and suspected by the community. Two of them were banished within these six years." This horde, at one time, consisted of four or five families of the names of Graham, Brown, Robertson, &c. The Jamiesons and Wilsons were also often seen at Lochgellie; but such were the numbers that were coming and going about the village, that it was difficult to say who were residents, and who were not. Some of them had feus from the proprietor of the estate of Lochgellie. They were dreaded for their depredations, and were well known to the country people, all over the shires of Fife, Kinross, Perth, Forfar, Kincardine and Aberdeen, by the name of the "Lochgellie band." The chiefs of

* Yetholm lies in a valley which, surrounded on all sides by lofty mountains, seems completely sequestered from the rest of the world—alike inaccessible from without, and not to be left from within. The valley has, however, more than one outlet.—*Chambers' Gazetteer of Scotland*.—Ed.

† In Hungary, their houses, which are always small, and poor in appearance, are commonly situated in the outskirts of the village, and, if possible, in the neighbourhood of some thicket or rough land.—*Bright*.—Ed.

this band were the Grahams, at the head of which was old Charles Graham, an uncommonly stout and fine-looking man. He was banished the kingdom for his many crimes. Charlie had been often in courts of justice, and on one occasion, when he appeared for some crime or other, the judge, in a surly manner, demanded of him, what had brought him there?—"The auld thing again, my lord, but nae proof," was the Tinkler's immediate reply. Ann Brown, one of his wives, and the chief female of the band, was also sentenced to banishment for fourteen years ; seven of which, however, she spent in the prison of Aberdeen. She remained altogether nine years at Botany Bay, married a Gipsy abroad, returned to Scotland, with more than a hundred pounds in cash, and now sells earthenware at St. Andrews.* Being asked why she left Botany Bay, while making so much money there, she said, "It was to let them see I could come back again."

Young Charlie Graham, son and successor, as chief, to old Charlie, was hanged at Perth, about thirty years ago, for horse-stealing. The anecdotes which are told of this singular man are numerous. When he was apprehended, a number of people assembled to look at him, as an object of wonder ; it being considered a thing almost impossible to take him. His dog had discovered to the messengers the place of his concealment, having barked at them as they came near the spot. His feelings became irritated at the curiosity of the people, and he called out in great bitterness to the officers : "Let me free, and gie me a stick three feet lang, and I'll clear the knowe o' them." His feet and hands were so handsome and small, in proportion to the other parts of his athletic body, that neither irons nor hand-cuffs could be kept on his ankles or wrists ; without injury to his person the gyves and manacles always slipped over his joints. He had a prepossessing countenance, an elegant figure, and much generosity of heart ; and, notwithstanding all his tricks, was an extraordinary favourite with the public. Among the many tricks he played, it is related that he once, unobserved, in a grass park, converted a young colt into a gelding. He allowed the animal to remain for some time in the possession of the owner, and then stole it. He was immediately detected, and apprehended ; but as the owner

* This woman is most probably dead, and the same may be said of some of the other characters mentioned in this and other chapters.—ED.

swore positively to the description of his horse, and Charlie's being a gelding, he got off clear. The man was amazed when he discovered the trick that had been played upon him, but when, where, and by whom done, he was entirely ignorant. Graham sold the animal to a third person, again stole it, and replaced it in the park of the original owner. He seemed to take great delight in stealing in this ingenious manner, trying how dexterously he could carry off the property of the astonished natives. He sometimes stole from wealthy individuals, and gave the booty to the indigent, although they were not Gipsies; and so accustomed were the people, in some places, to his bloodless robberies, that some only put their spurs to their horses, calling out, as they passed him: "Ah ha, Charlie lad, ye hae missed your mark to—night!" A widow, with a large family, at whose house he had frequently been quartered, was in great distress for want of money to pay her rent. Graham lent her the amount required; but as the factor was returning home with it in his pocket, Charlie robbed him, and, without loss of time, returned to the woman, and gave her a full discharge for the sum she had just borrowed from him.

He was asked, immediately before his execution, if he had ever performed any good action during his life, to recommend him to the mercy of his offended God. That of giving the widow and fatherless the money of which he immediately afterwards robbed the factor, was the only instance he adduced in his favour; thinking that thereby he had performed a virtuous deed. In the morning of the day on which he was to suffer, he sent a messenger to one of the magistrates, requesting a razor to take off his beard; at the same time, in a calm manner, desiring the person to tell the magistrate that, "unless his beard was shaven, he could appear before neither God nor man." A short time before he was taken out to the gallows, he was observed reclining very pensively and thoughtfully on a seat. All at once he started up, exclaiming, in a mournful tone of voice, "Oh, can ony o' ye read, sirs; will some o' ye read a psalm to me?" at the same time regretting much that he had not been taught to read. The fifty-first psalm was accordingly read to him, by a gentleman present, which soothed his feelings exceedingly, and gave him much ease and comfort. He was greatly agitated after ascending the platform—his knees knocking

against each other ; but just before he was cast off, his inveterate Gipsy feelings returned upon him with redoubled violence. He kicked from his feet both of his shoes, in sight of the spectators—to set at nought, as was supposed, some prophecy that he would die with them on ; and addressed the assembled crowd in the following words : “ I am this day to be married to the gallows-tree, by suffering in the manner of many of my ancestors ; and I am extremely glad to see such a number of respectable people at my wedding.” A number of the band attended his execution, and, when his body was returned to them, they all kissed it with great affection, and held the usual lyke-wake over it. His sweetheart, or widow, I am uncertain which, of the name of Wilson, his own cousin, put his corpse into hot lime, then buried it, and sat on his grave, in a state of intoxication, till it was rendered unfit for the use of the medical gentlemen ; it having been reported that he was to be taken out of his grave for the purpose of dissection. This man boasted greatly, while under sentence of death, of never having spilled human blood by committing murder.

Hugh Graham, brother to Charlie, above-mentioned, was stabbed with a knife by his own cousin, John Young, in Aberdeenshire. These powerful Gipsies never fell in with each other but a wrestling bout took place. Young generally came off victorious, but Graham, although worsted, would neither quit Young nor acknowledge his inferiority of strength. Young frequently desired Graham to keep out of his way, as his obstinate disposition would prove fatal to one of them some time or other. They, however, met again, when a desperate struggle ensued. Graham was the aggressor ; he drew his knife to stab Young, who wrested it out of his hand, and stabbing him in the upper part of the stomach, close to the breast, laid his opponent dead at his feet.* In this battle the Gipsy females, in their usual manner, took a conspicuous part, by assisting the combatants on either side.

* Young was chased for nearly thirty miles, by Highlanders, on foot, and General Gordon of Cairnfield, and others, on horseback ; and, as he was frequently in view, the affair much resembled a fox-hunt. The hounds were most of them game-keepers—an active race of men ; and so exhausted were they, before the Gipsy was caught, that they were seen lying by the springs, lapping water with their tongues, like dogs.—*Blackwood's Magazine*.—Ed.

Jenny Graham, sister of these Grahams, was kept by a gentleman as his mistress ; but, although treated with affection, such was her attachment to her old wandering way of life, that she left her protector and his wealth, and rejoined her erratic associates in the gang. She was a remarkably handsome and good-looking woman, and, while she traversed the country, she frequently rode upon an ass, which was saddled and bridled. On these occasions, she was sometimes dressed in a blue riding-habit and a black beaver hat. It was generally supposed that the stolen articles of value belonging to the family were committed to the care of Jenny. Margaret Graham, another sister, is still living, and is a woman of uncommon bodily strength ; so much so, that she is considered to be a good deal stronger than the generality of men. She was married to William Davidson, a Gipsy, at Wemyss. They have a large family, and sell earthenware through the country.

John Young, who stabbed his cousin, Hugh Graham, was one of seven sons, and though above five feet ten inches in height, his mother used to call him "the dwarf o' a' my bairns." He was condemned and hanged at Aberdeen for the murder. He wrote a good hand, and the country-people were far from being displeased with his society, while he was employed in repairing their pots and pans in the way of his calling. Sarah Graham, his mother, was of the highest Tinkler mettle. She lost a forefinger in a Gipsy fray. Peter Young, another son of Sarah's, was also hanged at Edinburgh, after breaking a number of prisons in which he was confined. He is spoken of as a singular man. Such was his generosity of character, that he always exerted himself to the utmost to set his fellow-prisoners free, although they happened not to be in the same apartment of the prison. The life of this man was published about the time of his execution. When any one asked old John Young where his sons were, his reply was, "They are all hanged." They were seven in number, and it was certainly a fearful end of a whole family. The following is an extract of a letter addressed to Mr. Blackwood, from Aberdeen, relative to Peter Young : "It is said, in your far-famed magazine, that Peter Young, brother to John Young, the Gipsy, likewise suffered at *Aberdeen*. It is true that he received sentence to die there, but the prison and all the irons the per-